US identifies terrorists whose assets RP must freeze

Story on PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, December 15, 2003 ★★ 90 pages / 10 sections / vol. 19 / no. 7 P15

Iggy gets brickbats from election rival

G.I. DIN AKO-GENUINE ILONGGO!

By Carlito Pablo

JOSE Pidal, aka Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, is gunning for a seat in Congress.

That should really be Arroyo, aka Pidal. But the incumbent he is challenging, Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada of Negros Occiden-

IGGY A4

Reds to earn P2.25B in poll fees, says AFP

By Christian V. Esguerra and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

COMMUNIST rebels could raise at least P2.25 billion during the election season if they are not stopped from exacting "permit-to-campaign" (PTC) fees from candidates in rebel-controlled areas nationwide, the military said yesterday.

Col. Eduardo del Rosario, head of the Army's Civil Affairs Group, said

REDS/ A9

SADDAM CAPTURED

Ex-Iraqi president falls near Tikrit

BAGHDAD—American forces captured a bearded Saddam Hussein, hiding in a hole in a farmhouse cellar near his hometown of Tikrit, the US military announced Sunday.

The arrest was carried out without a shot being fired and was a victory for the US-led coalition eight months after the fall of Baghdad.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we got him," said US administrator L. Paul Bremer at a news conference, adding: "The tyrant is a prisoner."

Bremer said Saddam was captured Saturday at 8:30 p.m. in the town of Dour, 15 km south of Tikrit, ending one of the most intense manhunts in history.

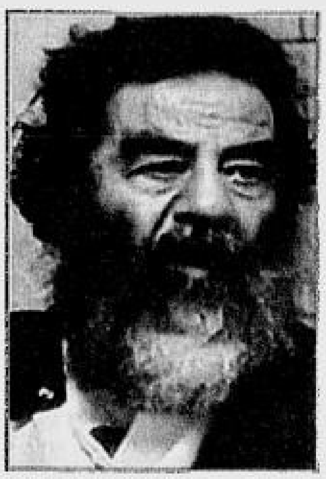
The top US military commander in Iraq, who saw Saddam overnight, said the deposed leader "has been cooperative and is talkative." He described Saddam as "a tired man, a man resigned to his fate."

In the capital, radio stations played celebratory music, residents fired small arms in the air in celebration and passengers on buses and trucks shouted, "They got Saddam! They got Saddam!"

At the news conference announcing his capture, US forces aired a video showing a bearded Saddam being examined by a doctor who held his mouth open with a tongue depressor, apparently to get a DNA sample. They then showed a photograph of Saddam after he was shaved.

Iraqi journalists in the audience stood, pointed and shouted "Death to Saddam!" and "Down with Saddam!"

The former Iraqi leader was being held at an undisclosed location, said the top US military officer in Iraq, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez. He added that US authorities had yet to determine whether to hand him over to a new Iraqi tribunal for trial.



SADDAM: Heavily bearded, he was found in a 6 x 8-ft spider hole. AP

"This success brings closure to the Iraqi people," Sanchez said.

"Saddam Hussein will never return to a position of power from which he can punish, terrorize, intimidate and exploit the Iraqi people as the did for more than 35 years."

British Prime Minister Tony Blair welcomed the capture.

"This is very good news for the people of Iraq. It removes the shadow that has been hanging over them for too long of the nightmare of a return to the Saddam regime," he said in a statement released by his office.

Forces from the 4th Infantry Division along with Special Forces captured Saddam, the US military said. There were no injuries in the raid, called "Opera-

SADDAM/ A20

Ople dies in Taiwan; 76

Suffers from heart attack during flight

By Jerome Aning

FOREIGN Secretary Blas F. Ople, a passionate nationalist who became a key ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo in her unflinching support for the US-led war on terror, died from a heart attack yesterday morning in Taiwan. He was 76.

Ople, a workaholic and chain smoker despite suffering from a lung disease, had difficulty breathing and then lost consciousness on Saturday night while on board a Japan Asia Airways flight from Tokyo to Bangkok, Foreign Undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin said.

The plane immediately declared a medical emergency and landed at the Chiang Kai-shek International Airport at about 10:30 p.m. Ople was rushed to the Minsheng General Hospital in Taoyuan county, east of Taipei.

Carlos Sorreta, Ople's assistant, said the foreign secretary died at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday after efforts to revive him failed.

Sorreta said Ople's wife Susana and other family members were in Taiwan to arrange for the return of the foreign secretary's body to Manila on Sunday night.

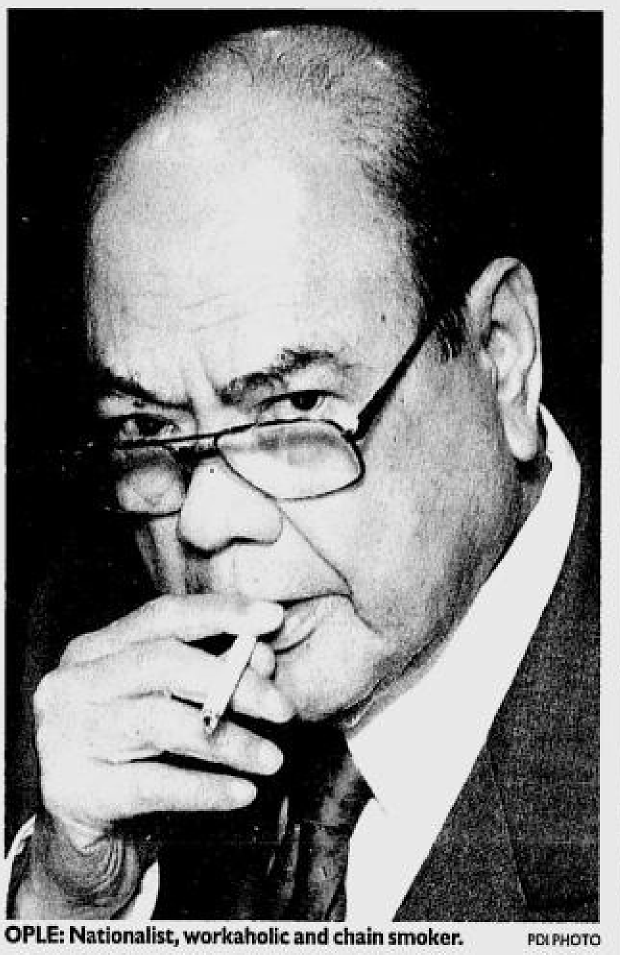
"The nation mourns the death of a great Filipino," Ms Macapagal, who was visiting Hong Kong, said in a statement. "We were awed by the vision and indomitable wit of Secretary Blas Ople. He was an architect of Philippine foreign policy in the finest tradition of enlightened and pragmatic diplomacy."

"We will miss him and the world will miss him," she added.

Employees at the Department of Foreign Affairs wept quietly as Ebdalin, foreign undersecretary in charge of policy, announced Ople's death. Ebdalin was designated acting foreign secretary until a replacement for Ople is found.

Ople was in Tokyo to accompany Ms Macapagal during the

OPLE/ A20



OPLE: Nationalist, workaholic and chain smoker. PDI PHOTO

From colorful journalist to political chameleon

THE PHILIPPINES yesterday mourned the sudden death of Foreign Secretary Blas F. Ople, a political chameleon who backed the dictator Ferdinand Marcos but later championed democracy after Marcos' ouster in the 1986 "People Power" Revolution.

A lively figure who loved a drink and a smoke, Ople first made his mark at 16 fighting the Japanese during World War II and espoused nationalist causes in his youth.

Toward the end of his life, he was viewed as a chief supporter of America's war on terror, its war in Iraq, and the deployment of US troops to hunt down Moro bandits. He also advocated a strong partnership between Manila and Washington in military and economic affairs.

As a labor minister during the dictatorial rule of Marcos, Ople framed the country's labor code and worked to promote labor rights.

During his stint in the Senate in the 1990s, however, he became a proponent of trade liber-

FROM COLORFUL/ A20

Popularity neither policy nor program

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

FROM THE Financial Times of London (Dec. 11, 2003), we have news that Arnold Schwarzenegger, former box-office actor, is sinking deeper into California's quicksand deficit, barely a month after sweeping the election as governor by a landslide.

California is "heading for a meltdown unless action is taken" to balance the budget, FT reported. Moody's Investors Services, a top credit rating agency, had downgraded almost $40 billion worth of Californian bonds by a notch, "raising the pressure for a solution to the state's budget woes."

The recent move by Schwarzenegger, a Republican, to cut vehicle license fees, said the report, had raised the general fund's expected cash shortfall through to June 2005 from $22 billion to $29.5 billion. Representatives of Moody's were in Manila recently to review the country's credit rating.

It will be recalled that weeks earlier after actor Fernando Poe Jr. announced his intention to stand for president in next year's elections and after Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho resigned from the Cabinet, Moody's warned of a downgrading of the Philippines' credit rating because of uncertainties over curbing Philippine fiscal deficits and the nation's economic direction beyond 2004. This uncertainty stemmed from widespread perception of Poe's competence to tackle complex economic prob-

POPULARITY/ A21

Comelec validates registration of 9M voters

By Blanche S. Rivera and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ONLY ABOUT a fifth of the country's 43 million registered voters validated their registration for the government's election modernization program, the Commission on Elections said yesterday.

The Comelec said voters whose registrations were not validated would still be allowed to vote in the May 14 elections, but they could be questioned by the election officer before they are given the ballots.

For the filing of candidacies, which starts today, the Comelec is expecting 450,000 national and local candidates to enlist during the 18-day filing period.

The poll body will be accepting certificates of candidacy until Jan. 2 for the coming elections.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said some 9 million voters made it to the deadline for validation on Friday, bringing the total number of validated registrants and new voters to 14 million.

Abalos said he was "happy" with the results of the validation, which ran from Aug. 4 to Dec. 12, because it came close to the Comelec target of 10 million to 15 million validated voters.

All registered voters were asked to go to their barangays and have their photos taken digitally, along with their demo-

COMELEC/ A8

WORKING VISIT? President Macapagal is greeted by a crowd of mostly live-in maids as she arrives at a convention center where she delivered a speech to Filipino workers in Hong Kong. AP

GMA woos OFW vote in Hong Kong trip

HONG KONG—Courting migrant Filipino workers who can now vote from abroad, President Macapagal-Arroyo pressed the flesh and handed out raffle prizes yesterday while telling a crowd of mostly live-in maids she still had much to do for them.

Ms Macapagal's brief appearance—at a hall decked with banners and packed with an estimated 5,000 people waving Philippine flags—had the trappings of a national presidential campaign going global.

"I've been working across continents to bring the message of Filipino pride and pride in the Filipinos' bright future," said the President, who arrived here fresh from a trade mission to Japan. She said she intended to improve her government's performance domestically and abroad "to uplift the lives of our people."

The President's trip was officially described as a "working visit to Hong Kong," but critics charged it was really politicking at taxpayer expense, staged before campaigning officially got under way on Feb. 10 for the May elections.

Overseas workers are crucial to the Philippine economy, sending home hard currency that supports millions of people, but it remains unclear whether they'll be a big factor in the presidential election.

Many of the workers are scattered around Asia and the Middle East, and Ms Macapagal was heading later yesterday to Bahrain for another appearance.

Hong Kong-based Filipino labor activists, who said Ms Macapagal hadn't done enough for overseas workers, have urged their supporters to turn Hong Kong into a "no-vote zone" for her—but 88,677 Filipinos here have registered to vote, and some

GMA/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon will experience cloudy skies with rains especially over the eastern section. Likewise, Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/12/15/03

US asks RP to freeze terrorists' assets

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE UNITED States has asked Philippine banking regulators to freeze the deposits and assets of 15 suspected international terrorists and one drug trafficker with ties to Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida terror network and those with links to another terrorist group, the Communist Party of Nepal.

In compliance with the US request, the Anti-Money Laundering Council and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas directed last week all banks and non-bank financial institutions nationwide to immediately report any transactions believed to be related to the individuals and groups identified by the US government.

Ordered frozen were the funds, assets or economic resources, including offices, of Tunisian nationals Nassim Saadi, Cherif Said Ben Abdelhakim, Lotfi Rihani, Lazher Ben Khalifa Ben Ahmed Rouine, Imed Ben Mekki Zarkaoui, Mourad Trabelşi, Kamel Ben Mouldi Hamraoui and Noureddine Drissi.

Also included in the US freeze list were Egyptian Radi Abd El Samie Abou El Yazid El Ayashi, Somalian Ciise Maxamed Cabdullaah, Iraqis Mohammed Tahir Hammid and Mohamed Amin Mostafa, Libyan Faraj Farj Hassan Al Saadi, and Moroccans Daki Mohamed and Hamadi Bouyahia.

The US government also included drug trafficker Dawood Ibrahim in the freeze list. Ibrahim, a Pakistani, is said to be involved in the large-scale shipment of narcotics to the United Kingdom and Western Europe.

"We hope that your government will freeze the assets of these individuals and implement other sanctions as soon as possible," said US Embassy Economic Counselor Morton Holbrook in a letter to AMLC executive director Vicente Aquino dated Nov. 13.

Also ordered frozen were the assets of the Communist Party of Nepal which is also known as the United Revolutionary People's Council and the People's Liberation Army of Nepal.

"Shutting off the flow of funds to the party is a vital step in reducing its ability to carry out additional terrorist activities," said the US government.

Republic Act 9194 or the amended Anti-Money Laundering Act allows the council to look into suspicious accounts without prior court approval as long as these involve kidnapping, hijacking, arson and murder, including those perpetrated by terrorists.

Muslim extremist groups in southern Philippines are suspected of having strong links with Bin Laden's al-Qaida network, believed to be behind the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

SEC, IC asked, too

Aside from the BSP, other AMLC members such as the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Insurance Commission are also expected to carry out the request of the US government in their regulatory jurisdictions.

The 15 suspected terrorists in the US list allegedly operate various terrorist cells in Italy and other parts of Europe, according to the report.

Some of them were said to have recruited volunteers for military camps in Iraq, organized by the Ansar al Islam group, a terrorist group operating in Northern Iraq.

The Italian-based terror group maintains contacts throughout Europe, the Middle East and Western Asia—in Pakistan, Iran, Yemen, Iraq, Malaysia and Afghanistan, said the US government in its report.

Based on information provided by the Italian government, the suspected terrorists were involved in al-Qaida-related criminal activities with members of terrorist cells in Milan, Cremona and Parma.

Material support

The 15 suspected terrorists provided financial and material support to terrorist activities in Italy and Europe and aided their colleagues in other European countries and even East Asia to reach Western countries freely and securely by providing fake identification materials, transit and residence.

As for Ibrahim, his syndicate was allegedly used by Bin Laden in his smuggling routes from South Asia, Middle East and Africa.

In the late 1990s, Ibrahim was said to have traveled to Afghanistan under the protection of the ousted Taliban government. He is also wanted in India for the Bombay Exchange bombings on March 12, 1993, which killed hundreds of Indians and injured more than a thousand.

All 15 suspected terrorists have been included in the United Nations sanctions list and are subject to a travel ban, arms embargo and asset freeze which the Philippines, as a UN member state, must enforce.

The US government has also sought Philippine assistance in uncovering the activities of other persons involved in a cell associated with Ahmed Fadhil Nazar al-Khalayleh alias Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi.

Swiss no longer welcome Marcos funds, says lawyer

IN AN apparent bid to erase its image as a haven for dirty money, banks in Switzerland no longer accept deposits the origins of which are questionable, including funds suspected of links to the Marcoses.

Sergio Salvioni, a Swiss lawyer hired by the Presidential Commission on Good Government to help recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcos family, said Swiss banks have been refusing to accept deposits believed to have links to the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos or any of his heirs.

"Swiss banks don't accept money from the Marcoses now. For the past two years, they have refused money of criminal origin," Salvioni said in a press conference at the PCGG office last week.

Switzerland had been the favorite haven for the deposits of many world leaders, particularly rogue dictators, because of its strict bank secrecy laws.

In recent years, however, the bank secrecy laws which had prevented Swiss banks from divulging any information on deposits have been challenged by governments seeking to recover the ill-gotten wealth of their former leaders.

But elsewhere in Europe, some banks still entertain Marcos deposits. "Some banks do, some banks don't," Salvioni said.

Salvioni, who has been on the trail of the Marcos wealth since 1986, disclosed that in the past six months they have uncovered about 300 suspected Marcos dummy corporations in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Belgium and Panama.

They are now investigating which of these dummy firms are still being used by the Marcos heirs to hide their ill-gotten money, he said. "It must be an important amount," Salvioni said.

Salvioni arrived in Manila last week to discuss with PCGG officials how to recover other suspected Marcos assets in Europe.

So far, the PCGG has recovered $683 million of the Marcos deposits in Swiss banks. The funds are now being held in escrow in the Philippine National Bank.

The Swiss Federal Court had ruled in 1990 that $350 million in deposits, which grew to $683 million with interest, which the Marcoses had stashed away in various Swiss banks were ill-gotten.

On July 15 this year, the Philippine Supreme Court issued a similar ruling which it affirmed on Nov. 18, ordering the forfeiture of the $683 million in favor of the government

Salvioni, however, believes the government has only skimmed the surface of the Marcos wealth.

He said the late dictator hid the money well.

"Maybe they don't even know where the money is," he said, referring to the heirs.

Salvioni said the Swiss banking industry, hailed as among the best in the world, had realized that it had to protect its image. *Dona Pazzibugan*

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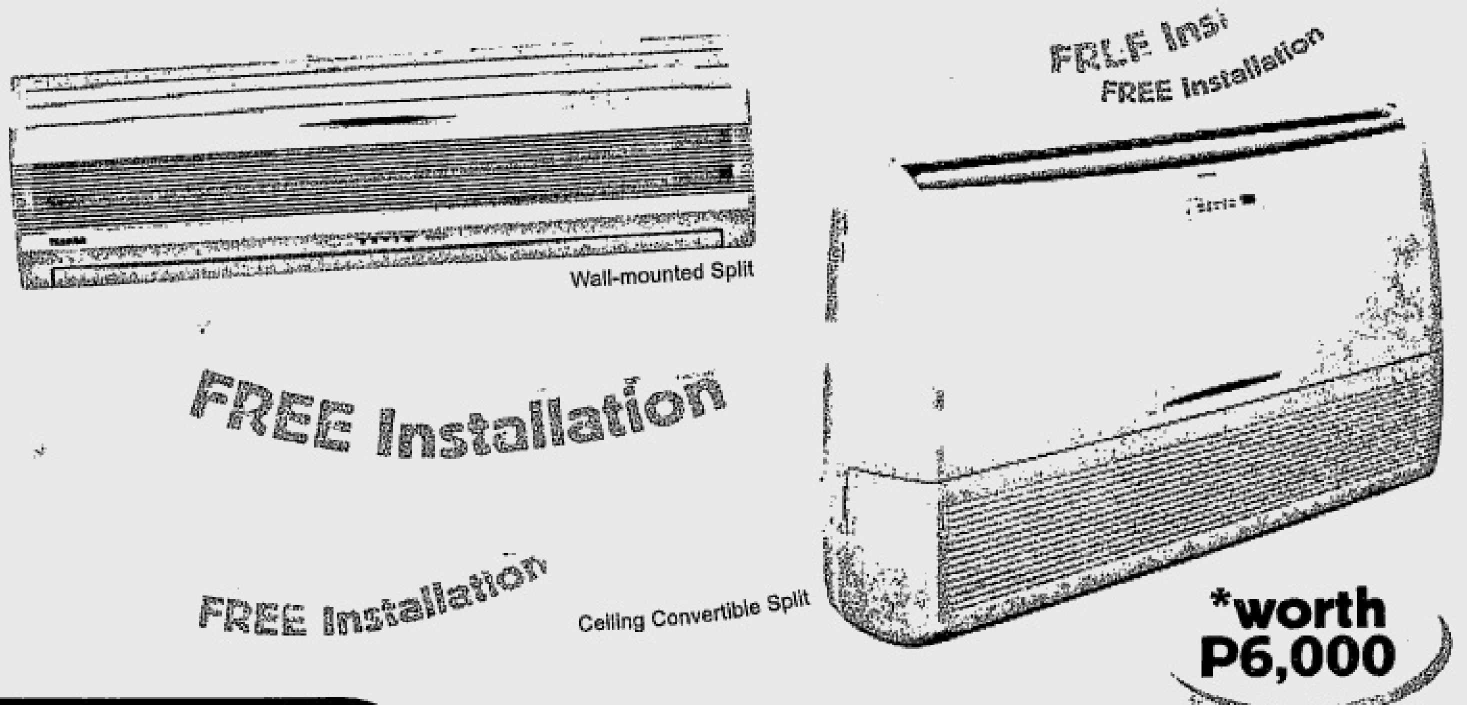

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PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO.: 4404, SERIES OF 2003

Debt trap threatens RP, analysts warn

THE PHILIPPINES is caught in a vicious debt trap as a shortfall in revenues has forced the country to persistently borrow to meet its huge debt obligations.

With little prospect of revenue reforms ahead of elections in May next year, the fiscal burden is expected to worsen, putting added pressure on interest rates and the peso currency, analysts warn.

The Philippine government, Asia's largest sovereign debt issuer outside Japan, has been running budget deficits in nine of the last 13 years.

With debt levels rising rapidly, revenue collection has been eroded by graft and inefficiency.

The country's public sector debt has ballooned to P5.162 trillion ($93.8 billion), greater than the value of the economy's total output, and is expected to hit P7.0 trillion by 2010.

Time bomb

Public sector debt is the amount of borrowings accumulated by the government and its agencies throughout the years, as well as money owed by the people and consequently paid through the national budget.

"The debt meter, like a time bomb, ticks away," Sen. Ralph Recto, who heads a panel studying the problem in the Upper House, remarked recently.

Recto said the borrowing level had reached a critical stage that nearly half the proposed 2004 national budget of P864.8 billion would go for debt servicing instead of vital development and social services for the country's 80 million people, one third of whom languish in poverty.

Confidence problem

Jose Isidro Camacho, who was President Macapagal-Arroyo's top economic adviser until he resigned as finance secretary last month, said the country's high debt level was not sustainable and had resulted in a higher cost of borrowing.

"It is also creating a sense of concern that could eventually lead to a problem of confidence" in the government's ability to meet interest obligations and principal payments, he said.

A respected investment banker, Camacho blamed the country's political system for the mess, referring particularly to Congress for delaying important legislative reforms to enhance revenue.

"In a worst-case scenario, the markets may stop lending money to the government, which could then be forced to turn to the IMF or some international agency for help," said David Cohen, an economist with MMS in Singapore.

No signs of default

Cohen ruled out any immediate signs that the Philippines would suffer a debt default because ratings given to the country were largely "below investment grade, but just barely."

"But when you depend on external financing, you are vulnerable to a shift in investor confidence," he warned.

Based on September data, total Philippine debt had reached 68.7 percent of gross national product (GNP), which is "quite alarming," according to Asian Development Bank economist Liu Xue Lin.

"If there are no reforms in place to increase revenue, then the government would be in a difficult situation," Liu said.

US rating agency Moody's warned last month that heightened political uncertainties was having adverse consequences on the government's financial position and the overall economy.

President Macapagal is to be challenged in upcoming elections by local movie icon Fernando Poe Jr., a high school dropout who has never held public office.

Despite her apparent inability to rein in corruption and the debt problem, Ms Macapagal is largely seen as pro-reform by the market.

Thio Chin Loo, a senior currency analyst at BNP-Paribas Bank in Singapore, said the 2004 elections "adds to the worry that debt will not narrow significantly in the next year or so.

"The only caveat is the improvement in the global economic environment, which bodes well for Philippine export prospects next year and hopefully (would) help stabilize debt levels and give some support to the peso," she said.

Thio forecasts the peso to remain at around the 55 level against the dollar before recovering to about 53 at the end of 2004. *AFP*

Malaysia readies Robot quiz team

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia may send a team to the Philippines to question terrorist leader Galib Andang, aka Commander Robot, about the abduction of tourists from a resort in April 2000, local media said Sunday.

"It is possible we might send a team to interrogate him or get the information from the Philippine authorities," Defense Minister Najib Razak was quoted here as saying by the Bernama news agency.

A special team of officers was preparing questions they want to ask Andang, said Ramli Yusoff, police commissioner for Sabah state on Borneo island.

Andang, a leader of the Abu Sayyaf terrorist gang, is in hospital after being shot during his arrest last week by government forces in Jolo. *AFP*

Search ordered for mini drug labs

INTERIOR and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina has ordered local government officials nationwide to inspect all regulated business establishments to ensure that no illegal drug laboratories were operating in their areas of jurisdiction.

In a memorandum issued on Dec. 10 to all city and municipal mayors, Lina warned that establishments which refuse inspection face sanctions such as the non-issuance, revocation or nonrenewal of permits, licenses and clearances or immediate closure.

Lina said the exercise of the visitorial powers of local government executives would boost the government's anti-drug campaign, adding that if mayors exercised these powers there would be no territory left for drug lords to operate in.

Lina issued the directive after the Philippine National Police noted that drug lords were now manufacturing illegal drugs in "mini-laboratories" in isolated places and were using legitimate business fronts to avoid detection. *Nelson F. Flores*

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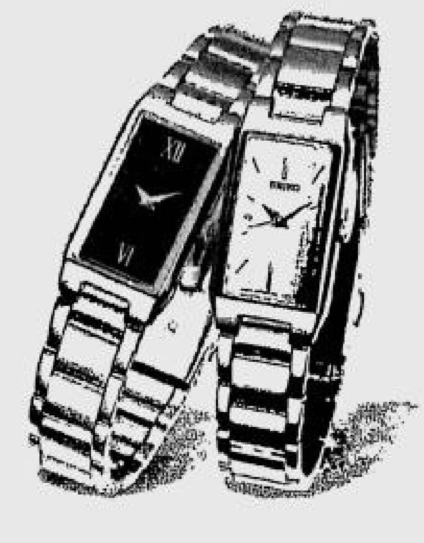

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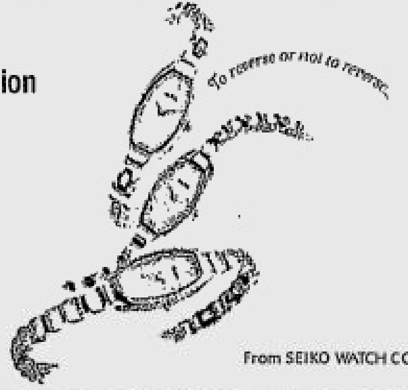

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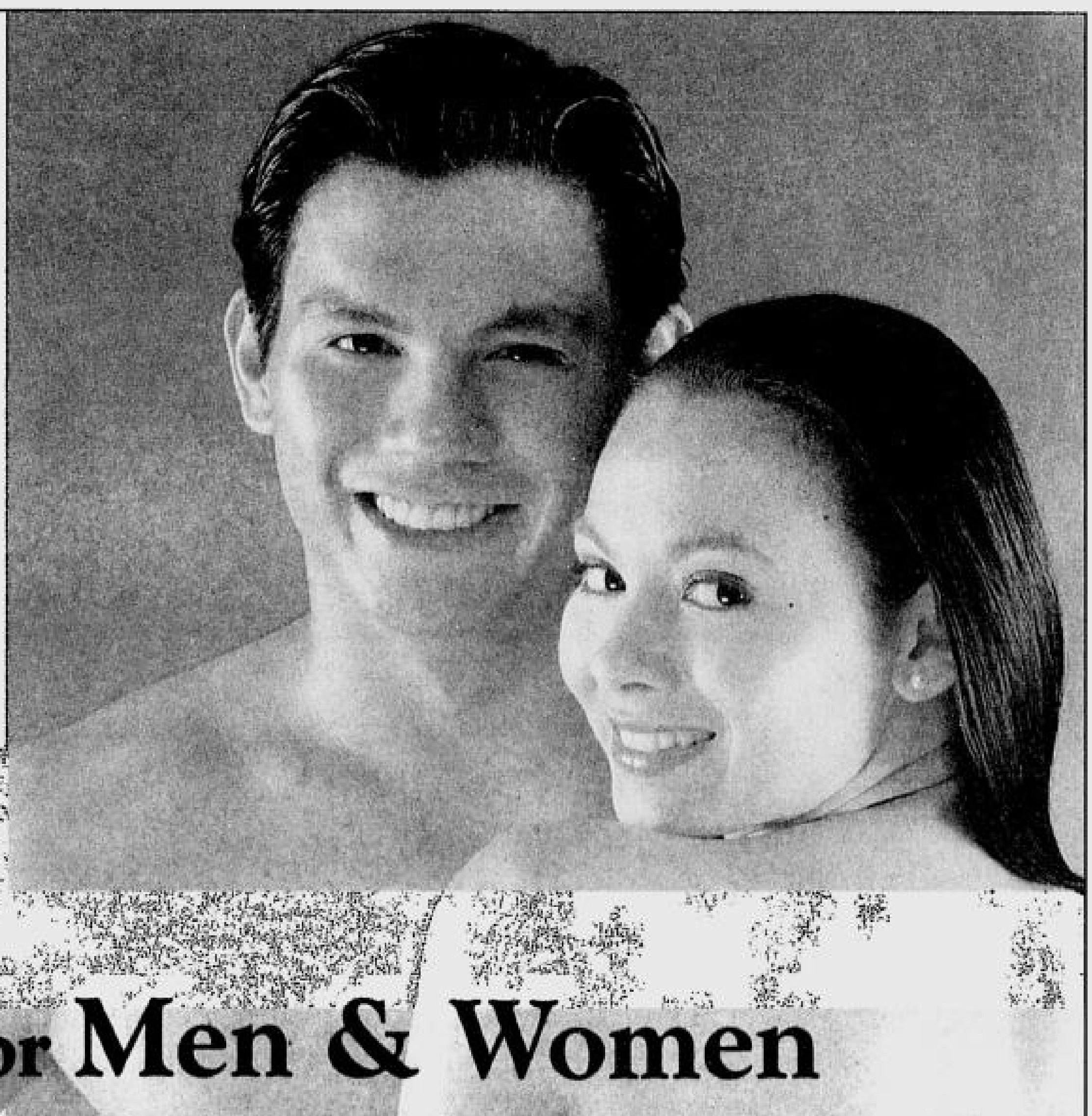

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Iggy gets brickbats from election rival

From page A1

tal's fifth district, insists the presidential brother-in-law is better known as the owner of bank accounts supposedly used by First Gentleman Miguel "Mike" Arroyo to launder money.

The accounts, with an aggregate total of P200 million, carried the name of the brothers' paternal grandfather, Jose Ma. Pidal Arroyo.

Would Iggy or "Ignacito" dare run under the assumed name that guarantees as much recall as ridicule?

"I am running scared," Lozada said, laughing, when asked if he thought he stood a chance against Iggy or Arroyo or Pidal, or all of the above.

But the resolve with which Arroyo is said to be preparing himself for the local battle royal with a dash of national politics is no laughing matter.

Yesterday, Lozada, chair of the House committee on foreign affairs, said Arroyo's political machinery had "shifted to full gear."

"They have money—lots of it," Lozada noted. "I've received reports that his supporters were distributing rice to my constituents by helicopter."

The original Jose Pidal was from Iloilo, but the current one owns land in the contested district.

For good measure, Lozada added, Arroyo—who grew up in Manila, studied in the United States, and spoke mostly in English—had hired a coach to thoroughly learn the local language. "They say he can already speak Ilonggo, but is having problems getting the right accent,"' Lozada said.

ARROYO, aka Jose Pidal

LOZADA

Iggy reacts

Yesterday in Bacolod City, Arroyo said there was no truth to any of Lozada's brickbats.

He had not hired a speech trainer, he said, because "speaking fluent Ilonggo is not necessary in Congress, as long as I understand what the people need."

And while he also denied that his supporters were distributing rice to voters, Arroyo pointed out: "It is not a bad idea to help people, especially during Christmas."

Lozada, an original member of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats and appointments secretary to then President Fidel V. Ramos, is seeking a third term. He was stripped of the Lakas leadership in Western Visayas when the chairmanship was given to Arroyo months before the Pidal scandal broke.

The party rule granting equity to the incumbent makes Lozada Lakas' official candidate, but he said he would rest assured of this only when he sees his nomination form. In any case, he declared, "I definitely will be running." He is set to file his certificate of candidacy on Dec. 26.

Arroyo is just as determined, and prepared for whichever way the selection goes: "I have always said I could run under another party." He said nothing about running another name.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a presidential aspirant, launched the Pidal exposé on Aug. 18, pointing to the First Gentleman as the man behind the alias. Iggy came out just over a week later, on Sept. 1, claiming ownership of the accounts in an attempt to take the heat away from his older brother.

The Pidal issue is expected to be one of the opposition's major assault weapons against President Macapagal when the campaign season starts. Opposition lawmakers are currently trying to revive the stalled Senate probe of the controversial accounts. *With a report from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

GMA woos OFW vote in Hong Kong trip

From page A1

are clearly fans of Ms Macapagal.

"We want her," said Concepcion Bersola, a maid from Manila. "She knows everything. She's very clever."

The President is seeking a full six-year term after being swept to power by mass protests in January 2001 that toppled President Joseph Estrada, an actor-turned-politician now detained on corruption charges.

Ms Macapagal reminded the crowd—which had been fired up in advance by a lively band playing Elvis Presley classics and Christmas carols—that she'd signed a law in February that lets expatriate Filipinos vote.

Raffle gifts

Filipinos who won raffle gifts, ranging from medical checkups to housing lots, were paraded on the stage as a beaming President handed out their prize certificates and shook their hands.

"Merry Christmas," she told the crowd.

Her trip is an opportunity her likely election foes—actor Fernando Poe Jr., former Sen. Raul Roco and opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson—would have difficulty matching.

A spokesperson for Lacson called the trip politics disguised as official business, and predicted Filipinos would see through it.

"A lot of the things she has been doing is really campaigning," Lito Banayo said. "But then again she can always cover up for that by saying as president she has to communicate with all Filipinos all over the world. That's the legal excuse but in reality everybody knows she's going to those places just to campaign."

It's unclear whether the overseas vote will make much of a difference, but it could in a tight race. The Philippines has about 40 million voters, but out of the 7 million Filipinos overseas, just 363,959 have registered for the upcoming race.

Lacson is using an Internet site accessible to overseas voters, but it's unclear whether he will campaign overseas.

"We have a 90-day campaign period and that's pretty limited," Banayo said. "Maybe Hong Kong because it's quite near, you can fly in and out. But Bahrain and other places in the Middle East—and other places—would take three, four days."

Many of the maids said they'd enjoy a visit by Poe, though not necessarily because he's a candidate.

"I'd like to see him because he's a movie star, but I wouldn't want him for president," said Imelda Bustinera, who is from Manila.

Bustinera said Ms Macapagal was "just using us" to get votes—but she plans to vote for her anyway. *AP*

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'No sacred cow' Berroya willing to quit anytime

By Christian V. Esguerra

INSISTING he was no "sacred cow," one of the perceived "untouchables" in the Philippine National Police yesterday claimed he was willing to cut short his career and retire even today, if doing so would save the force from more controversy.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya said he was just awaiting the order of PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. sacking him as chief of the Civil Security Group.

Berroya's relief would be the final piece in the controversial first wave of the top-to-bottom revamp that rocked the PNP two weeks ago.

Retirement means "sacrificing" four more years of police service, Berroya said.

A 1969 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, the controversial officer said he was not due to retire until 2007, owing to President Macapagal-Arroyo's memorandum extending his term last March when he turned 56, the compulsory retirement age for police and military officials. He said the President had given him another year with a possible three-year extension to make up for the four-and-a-half years he spent in jail for alleged involvement in kidnapping activities.

The INQUIRER learned that Berroya's relief order was due out either yesterday or today, the start of the Commission on Elections' ban on government reorganizations. At least two PNP officials earlier told the INQUIRER that Berroya was being groomed for a juicy position at the Bureau of Customs.

Berroya broke his silence following accusations by several senior PNP officials that he and Director Eduardo Matillano, erstwhile chief of the powerful Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, had asked Malacañang to exempt them from the revamp.

The officials said "intense lobbying" by the two—among the President's most trusted lieutenants—was the reason Ebdane had to stay the new assignments of 17 of the 32 officials affected by the reshuffle, including Berroya and Matillano.

Yesterday, Berroya admitted he had discussed the revamp with Ebdane and other "Malacañang personalities," but said it was not to lobby for a position or to stay on as CSG chief.

Palawan bolsters anti-cyanide drive

CYANIDE fishers beware.

To increase awareness of the evils of cyanide fishing and encourage the public to report illegal fishers, the Industriya sa Dagat Association of Fish Exporters (Isda-Exporters) and its partners will hand out cash awards and certificates of recognition to those responsible for the confiscation of the deadly substance and the apprehension of suspected violators in the towns of El Nido, Taytay, Quezon and Bataraza in Palawan.

The awards ceremony will be held on Dec. 16 at 5 p.m. at the CAP Auditorium in Puerto Princesa City.

Isda-Exporters president Benzon Cheng said the support of NGOs like the Palawan NGO Network Inc. and the Marine Aquarium Council and its partner agencies in government like the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and Palawan Council for Sustainable Development has resulted in the effective monitoring of the illegal activity and the initial success of the movement.

"We are off to an auspicious start in our effort to curb the practice of cyanide fishing in our seas and, with our partnership with the NGOs as well as local and national government officials, we are confident we can sustain this campaign," Cheng said.

The Philippines is the largest exporter of live fish in the world, with most of the catch coming from Palawan.

But the practice of using cyanide has threatened the coral reefs and sea grasses where the fish thrive.

This prompted the fish exporters to launch "Cyanide Watch" in September and set up "Sumbungan Hotlines" where the public could give information about cyanide fishers.

The awardees include 2Lt. Ashley Nastor and T/Sgt. Vicente Canteras of the 32nd Marine Co. who confiscated 100 kilos of sodium cyanide in Bataraza town.

Expected to hand out the awards are Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes and Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

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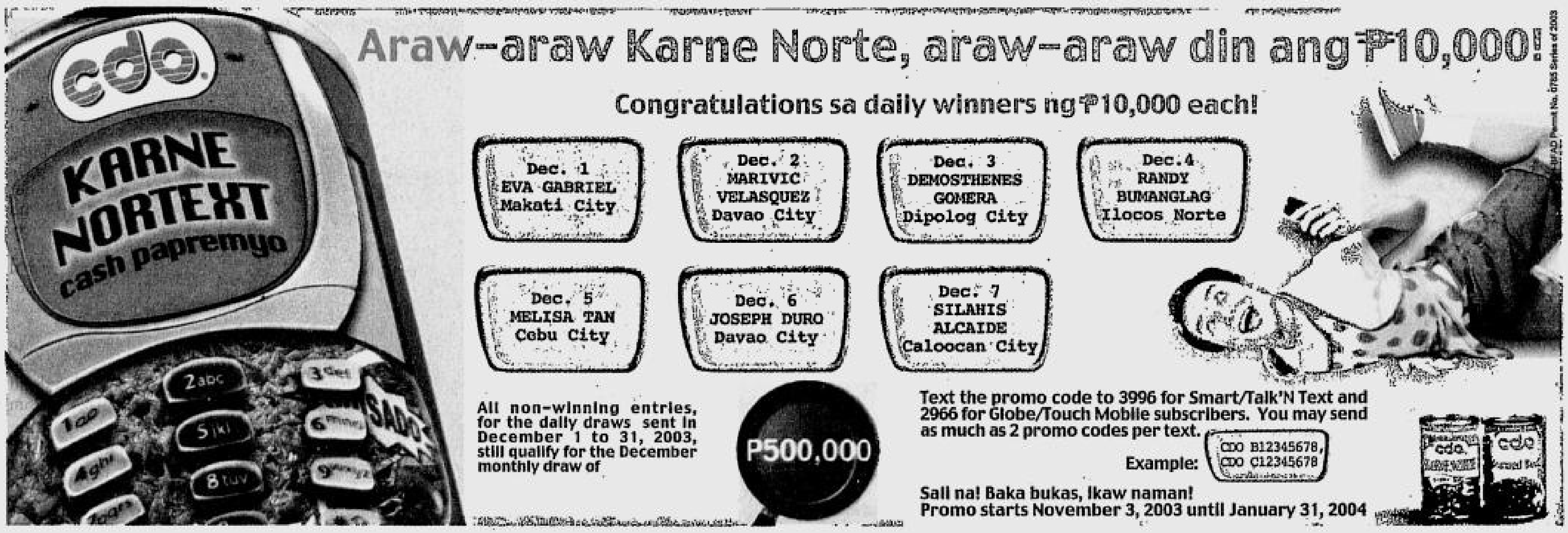

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Ping: Talks with Poe could run up to deadline

By Christine O. Avendaño,
Manila, **and Melvin Gascon,**
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

OPPOSITION presidential contenders movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. and Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson will meet again this week to thresh out details on how they could unify the opposition before the Jan. 2 deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy.

"We have agreed to continue talks, until such time that a decision is made, and this would be before the last day of the filing (of candidacy)," Lacson said in Nueva Viscaya on Saturday night.

Poe and Lacson met on Saturday, their second meeting since November, and agreed to form a small group, which would include both of them, to resolve the crisis that has divided the opposition over the choice of its official standard-bearer.

For opposition's sake

Lacson said he and Poe agreed on Saturday to decide between themselves who the united opposition standard-bearer would be for the May 2004 elections not later than Jan. 2.

"We have agreed to talk for the sake of a united opposition. '*Di na magtatagal na tayo'y magkakaisa din bilang isang lapian* (It won't be long before we will be united as an opposition bloc)," Lacson assured his Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino party mates at an oath-taking ceremony in Nueva Vizcaya.

According to Lacson, Poe has not accepted his proclamation last week as the presidential candidate of the newly formed opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

Simple nomination

The opposition senator said that Poe told him he had initially accepted the coalition's nomination believing that it was a simple nomination similar to that accorded Lacson by his LDP party mates on Dec.4.

The KNP coalition, led by LDP president and chair Sen. Edgardo Angara, had proclaimed Poe its standard-bearer at a big gathering in Makati City on Dec.10.

The senator's camp also quoted Lacson as saying that Poe had told him that before the coalition's proclamation, he had met with Angara who told him (Poe) the coalition would nominate him to be its standard-bearer.

Sotto denial

As this developed, Sen. Vicente Sotto III, Poe's spokesperson, urged Angelito Banayo, the spokesperson for Lacson, to refrain from issuing statements that were mere "speculations and insinuations."

Sotto denied Banayo's statements that Poe had agreed to postpone his filing of candidacy for president; .that Poe had agreed to a new selection process, and that the reason the actor had skipped his proclamation was that the latter had found the selection process to be unfair.

The senator said that Poe did not mention any of these things when they talked after his meeting with Lacson.

"*Ang sabi sa akin ni FPJ*, okay *magusap ulit sila ni* Sen. Lacson *para pag-usapan ang mga hindi pagkakaunawaan* (What FPJ told me was that he and Lacson will talk again to discuss their differences," Sotto told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Lacson said he would respect the outcome of a selection process, which would have the concurrence of a majority of LDP members, even if this would mean having to give up his candidacy.

Honorable man

Asked if he thought Poe was willing to sacrifice his presidential ambition, Lacson said: "Being the honorable man that he is, I am hopeful he will do the same."

"That is the essence of democracy. This is why we have this selection process. When there's a (party) decision, it should be (a decision of) the majority, not just of two persons," he said.

Lacson said his meeting with Poe, which was arranged by a "common friend" offered "a very bright, very positive future" for the opposition.

"(The meeting) only confirmed my initial impression of Mr. Poe that he was indeed *disente* (decent), *maginoo* (a gentleman) *at tapat sa kanyang salita* (and true to his word)," Lacson said.

He said Poe had assured him that the actor would protest any attempts to rig the selection process. "*Pag hindi tama* (if it's not just), I myself will object," Lacson quoted Poe as telling him.

In Solano, Nueva Vizcaya, House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla on Sunday urged his allies in the opposition to let Lacson and Poe settle the issue of the standard-bearer between themselves.

"We are heartened by the latest development. We consider it a healthy sign, a good indication that, eventually, there will be unity in the opposition," Padilla, a supporter of Lacson, said.

"Whatever agreement they would reach, the opposition would be happy to ratify and adopt their decision," he said.

In Iloilo City, Lakas provincial chair Rep. Arthur Defensor said the ruling party remains undaunted by the meeting between Poe and Lacson which could result in a united opposition ticket.

"We are not alarmed. We have long anticipated the possibility that the opposition may unite because its leaders know fully well that if they continue to remain divided, that will spell their defeat. That's why they are fully cognizant that the only way they can survive is to unite," Defensor said yesterday. ***With a report from Raj Padilla, PDI Visayas Bureau***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, December 15, 2003
3rd Week of Advent

1st Reading:	Num 24:2-7, 15-17
Gospel:	Mt 21:23-27

Jesus had entered the Temple and was teaching when the chief priests, the teachers of the Law and the Jewish authorities came to him and asked, "What authority have you to act like this? Who gave you authority to do all this?"

Jesus answered them, "I will also ask you a question, only one. And if you give me an answer, then I will tell you by what authority I do these things. When John began to baptize, was it a work of God, or was it merely something human?"

They reasoned out among themselves, "If we reply that it was a work of God, he will say: Why, then, did you not believe him? And if we say: The baptism of John was merely something human, beware of the people: since all hold John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know."

And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what right I do these things."

Commentary

The high priests approached Jesus to ask about his religious authority and the truth of his message. They were motivated by their evil intentions. But Jesus does not allow his truth to be revealed to them. He purposely hid it from them. This is what happens with people who approach the Christian faith with a bad disposition, criticism, or malice. They shall never have access to the truth. The gospel of God shall be hidden from them unless they have a change of heart.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Treachery—The essence of treachery is the sudden and unexpected attack by an aggressor without the slightest provocation on the part of the victim, thus depriving the latter of any real chance to put up a defense, and thereby ensuring the commission of the attack without risk to the aggressor. Treachery requires the concurrence of two conditions: (1) the employment of a means of execution that gives the person attacked no opportunity for self-defense or retaliation; and (2) the deliberate and conscious adoption of the means of execution. There is no treachery when the assault is preceded by a heated exchange of words between the accused and the victim; or when the victim is aware of the hostility of the assailant towards the former. In the instant case, the verbal and physical squabble prior to the attack proves that there was no treachery, and that the victim was aware of the imminent danger to his life. Moreover, the prosecution failed to establish that appellant had deliberately adopted a treacherous mode of attack for the purpose of depriving the victim of a chance to fight or retreat. Certainly, the victim knew that his scuffle with appellant could eventually turn itno a violent physical clash. The existence of a struggle before the fatal blows were inflicted on the victim clearly shows that he was forewarned of the impending attack, and that he was afforded the opportunity to put up a defense. Indeed, a killing done at the spur of the moment is not treacherous. Moreover, any doubt as to the existence of treachery must be resolved in favor of the accused. [Citations omitted] [En Banc, Justice Panganiban, People vs Escarlos, G.R. No. 148912, September 10, 2003]

BY R. B. VERA

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One man holds Senate at bay

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SENATE has threatened to block the budget of the Department of Transportation and Communications because of the refusal of an official of an attached agency to resign from his post.

Senators Vicente Sotto III and Joker Arroyo, in particular, had questioned the presence on the Civil Aeronautics Board of aviation liberalization advocate Alberto Lim, who was affiliated with the advocacy group Freedom to Fly Coalition.

Freedom to Fly has been linked to the controversial Accelerated Growth, Investment and Liberalization with Equity (Agile) group, a USAID-funded organization accused of trying to influence Philippine policy and sway public opinion toward supporting American interests.

Lim, while being open about his advocacy of aviation liberalization, said there was no reason for the budget of an entire department to be held hostage because of him, as he was not guilty of whatever it was the Senators were accusing him.

"I feel I'm being effective [in the job]. They have no reason to single me out. They're just doing so because I was a member of FFC, which is a member of Agile," he said in an interview on Friday.

Lim denied being part of Agile's roster of consultants, however, although he admitted being one of Freedom to Fly's founding members.

But he said he severed his connections with Freedom to Fly when President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed him to the CAB board. He did this, he said, to avoid the perception of a conflict of interest.

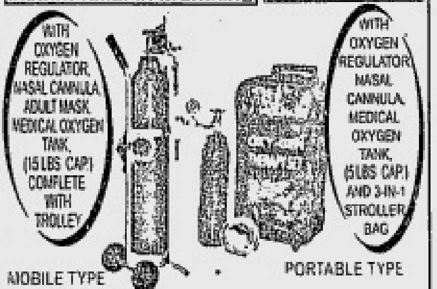
Conflict of interest was the issue Senators Sotto and Arroyo were particularly concerned about. With Lim as the private sector representative in the CAB, he was seen as having power to sway aviation policies to favor FFC.

Lim said he was only in CAB because the President appointed him, and his only concern was to protect the interests of the users of air services, mainly the tourism industry and overseas Filipino workers.

He made it clear he was not about to resign on the whim of some senators.

"If the senators say so? No, I will not resign. I will not hang on but I will not resign. This is more of an imposition on my time. I don't earn very much from this job and I have to rush home from trips abroad just to attend meetings that sometimes only get canceled at the last minute," he said.

He added that he was looking out for government interests as well as representing the government's position with regard to the aviation industry, "which is liberalization."



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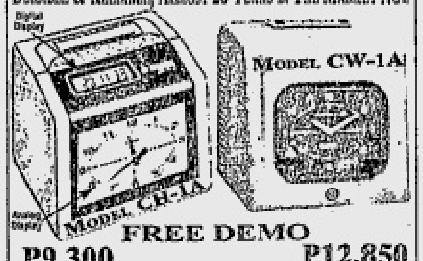

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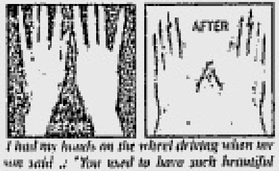

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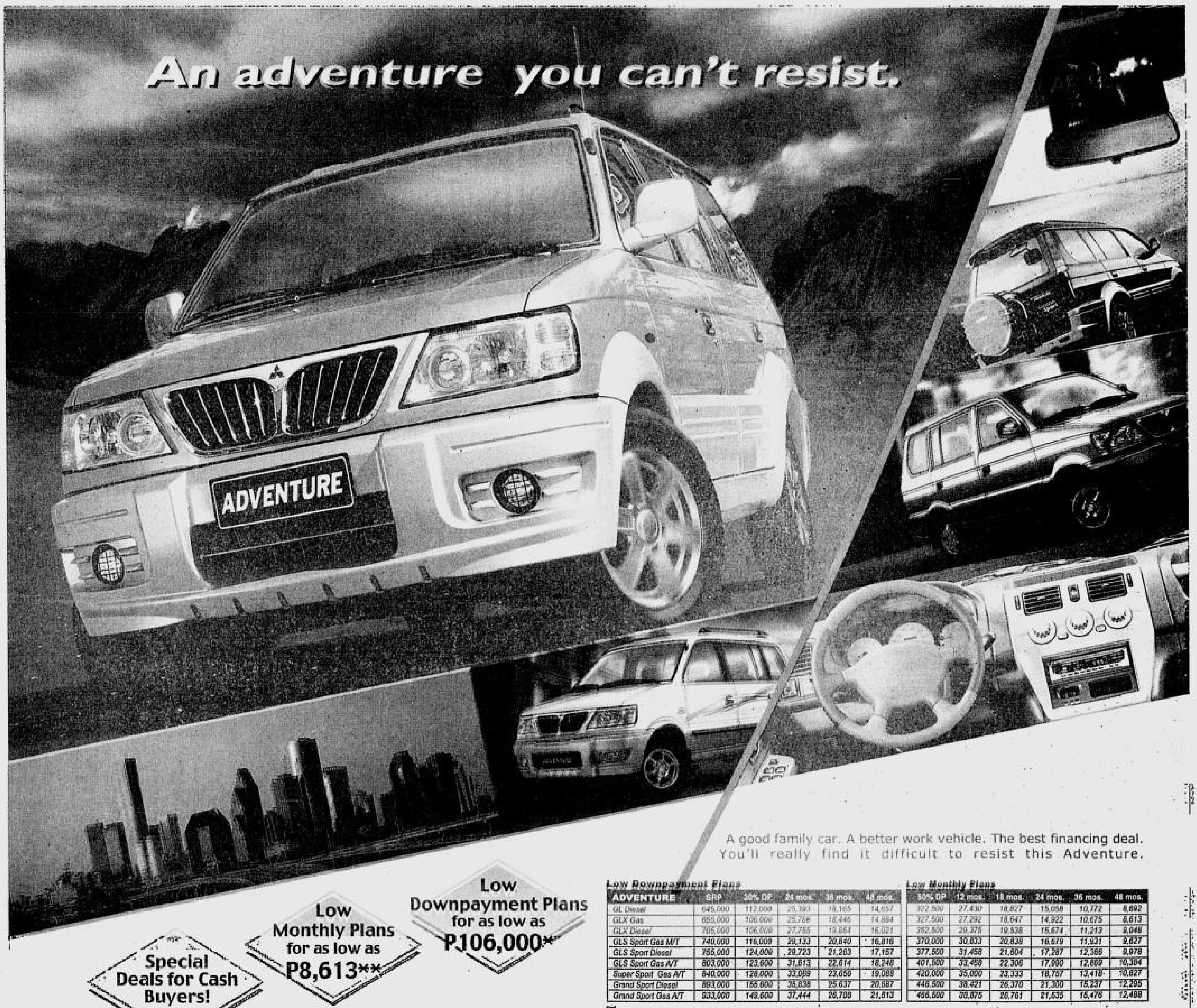

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Comelec validates registration of 9M voters

From page A1

graphic information. This was also a chance to transfer voting precincts for those who have moved.

The poll body seeks to have a computer database of all registered voters in the country as part of its three-pronged election modernization program. The database should eliminate the presence of fictitious and flying voters by networking Comelec records in all its offices.

The Comelec purchased P1 billion worth of validating machines from the French-led consortium Sagem. The machines were brought to the malls last week to facilitate the validation of busy employees and family members.

Drug test

Before they can file their certificates of candidacy, all candidates must first visit drug testing centers to ensure that they are clean of illegal drugs, according to Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri (Lakas, Bukidnon).

Zubiri, vice chair of the House committee on illegal drugs, said a mandatory drug test for those aspiring for public office was required under the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

"Comelec is duty-bound to reject certificates of candidacies filed by aspirants if they fail to present a certificate saying they're negative for drug abuse," he said.

Zubiri said that not even Ms Macapagal was exempted from this requirement, noting that she herself signed this measure into law.

Abalos said yesterday the poll agency was not expecting any big fish to come on the first day of filing of certificates of candidacy because "it would be impractical for them."

Most politicians wait until the last day of filing because if they file early, they will be covered by campaign laws, said Abalos, a long-time mayor of Mandaluyong.

"Nobody would be filing on the first day for practical reasons. Once you're a candidate, you will be covered by laws on premature campaigning, and there are a lot of grounds to charge you with that," Abalos said in a phone interview yesterday.

He said that candidates' mere guesting or speaking at forums where they are welcomed by placards and other campaign materials could be a ground for premature campaigning.

The campaign period officially starts in the second week of February or 90 days before the elections. Candidates found guilty of premature campaigning can be disqualified.

Abalos said politicians need not take the risk unless they wanted to create publicity for their candidacy by doing things that border on the legal and illegal.

Gimmick

"Each has a gimmick for the elections," he said, but he added that those who have already declared that they are running would stay quiet for a while because "everyone knows [they] are already a candidate."

Of the presidential aspirants, Abalos said only former Sen. Raul Roco was said to be coming today. Roco's camp, however, denied this.

Abalos said he was sure that opposition candidates, actor Fernando Poe Jr. and former Philippine National Police chief, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, would not be filing anything.

Poe and Lacson, who have both declared that they are running for president, met recently to tackle ways to unite the opposition.

Ms Macapagal, who declared her intention to seek the presidency this year after earlier dropping plans to run, would also not be around today, said Abalos, a former officer of Ms Macapagal's political party Lakas-CMD

"Everyone has until Jan. 2," Abalos said. Those who file on the first day are usually nuisance candidates who come to the Comelec with fanfare and predictions, he said.

Abalos said he has directed lawyer Alioden Dalaig, new head of the Comelec legal division to personally attend to the more important candidates coming in so as not to cause any commotion in the office.

National candidates are required to file their certificates of candidacy at the Comelec central office in Intramuros, Manila, while local candidates are to submit their forms to the election officers in their municipalities or cities.

Party affiliation

The Comelec in Western Visayas also expects a low number of candidates filing their certificates of candidacy because many candidates have not finalized their affiliations with political parties and coalitions.

"We expect the deluge of applications when the party affiliations and nominations of candidates are fixed," Victor Gaborne, Comelec regional director, said in a telephone interview.

Gaborne said the split within the opposition party Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) could pose a problem in the filing of application by LDP-affiliated candidates.

There could be disputes on who is the authorized party official nominating candidates for positions, he said.

The LDP, the largest opposition party, has been divided between those supporting the presidential bids of Poe and Lacson. The party's president has removed pro-Lacson officers from their positions, including Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino, the secretary-general, but this has been opposed by the Aquino camp.

In cases of two nominations from a party for the same position, the Comelec national office will determine who the party official authorized to nominate candidates is. *With a report from sCarlito Pablo*

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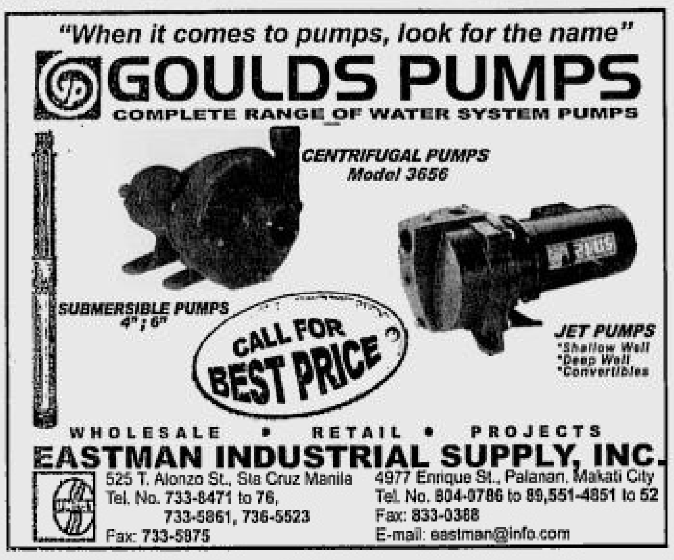
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Reds to earn ₱2.25B in poll fees, says AFP

From page A1

that the Communist Party of the Philippines' armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), had begun collecting the fees from people seeking elective positions next year.

Earlier, communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal disclosed that PTC negotiation and collection activities had been going on for the past several months. The payment of such fees, he said, had long been "an election fact of life since the CPP-NPA came into prominence."

Citing Army field reports, Del Rosario said the rebels were charging candidates for governor P500,000 each; those running for congressional seats, between P300,000 and P500,000; and those seeking mayoral posts, between P50,000 and P300,000.

As the military expected some 450,000 candidates for public offices in the May elections, Del Rosario said that the rebels could collect P2.25 billion based on the military's "honest estimate" that only 10 percent of the candidates would pay at least P50,000 in "campaign fees."

The Army official said that the rebels usually settled for eight M-16 rifles if a candidate could not shell out P500,000, and four M-16 rifles instead of P300,000.

Rosal said the PTC fee for national candidates was always "open to negotiation."

Even during truce

In an interview last week, the CPP leader said the "processing" of PTC fees would continue even during the 15-day truce that his group declared in the spirit of Christmas.

"We even expect to receive more queries from candidates because of the truce. They will surely take advantage of the stop in the fighting to freely transact their business with us," Rosal said.

"It's the candidate's way of acknowledging the political authority of the revolutionary forces in the Red-controlled areas," he claimed.

Party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) and Rep. Mario Aguja have filed House Bill No. 3581 seeking to criminalize the collection of "revolutionary tax" and PTC fee" by the NPA rebels as "harassment" and an "extortion attempt" against candidates.

Del Rosario said the bill would "add more teeth to the government's campaign against crimes committed by the NPA against the people."

But Rosal poked fun at it, and even dared Rosales, a former street parliamentarian, and the government to stop the "long line of candidates" that, he claimed, "are willing to pay PTC fee just to be allowed at this early" to hit the campaign trail in rebel-claimed territories.

He advised the government to "just" respect the "authority of the revolutionary movement." He said the NPA had 130 guerrilla fronts scattered across the country.

Rosal reiterated that no candidate could escape payment of the PTC in the rebel areas. "The best thing the candidates can do is meet with the legitimate and authorized representative of the NPA to settle the required PTC fee," he said.

"The fee can [also] be in the form of material goods, such as communication equipment [radio sets and cell phones], cash and other things that we need in our daily operation. This can be discussed during negotiation," he said.

Living in luxury?

The military yesterday belied Rosal's earlier claim that the fees were used to fund the rebels' socioeconomic, health, educational and cultural projects in the countryside.

"This is a big lie," Del Rosario said in a statement. "The truth is most of the proceeds go to the pockets of their leaders, making the lives of the people more miserable and introducing political candidates to corruption."

In contrast to the top NPA leaders' "luxurious lifestyle," supposedly funded by campaign collections, ordinary rebels receive nothing from the loot as they suffer in the field, the Army official claimed.

"That's a rehashed and old accusation from the AFP. They are just fishing for information but they don't know anything about the financial situation of the revolutionary movement. The military has zero knowledge of our funds," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview early last night.

He countered with a similar allegation by pointing at corrupt government and military officials. "Whoever made this accusation against us believes that because there are lots of corrupt high AFP officials, there are also corrupt NPA rebel leaders," he said.

"They are wrong. From the local level up to the regional and the central committee of the CPP, all of the money is duly accounted," he explained.

Rosal recalled that the government used to trumpet that the funding source of the communist rebellion comes from abroad. "Now it's the PTC this time. But we have long been collecting this financial requirement from the candidates," he pointed out.

He said the Netherlands-based CPP leaders lived on their own and did not rely for their subsistence on their Philippine-based comrades. "They write books, accept speaking engagements, plus [receive] their monthly allowance from their host country," he said.

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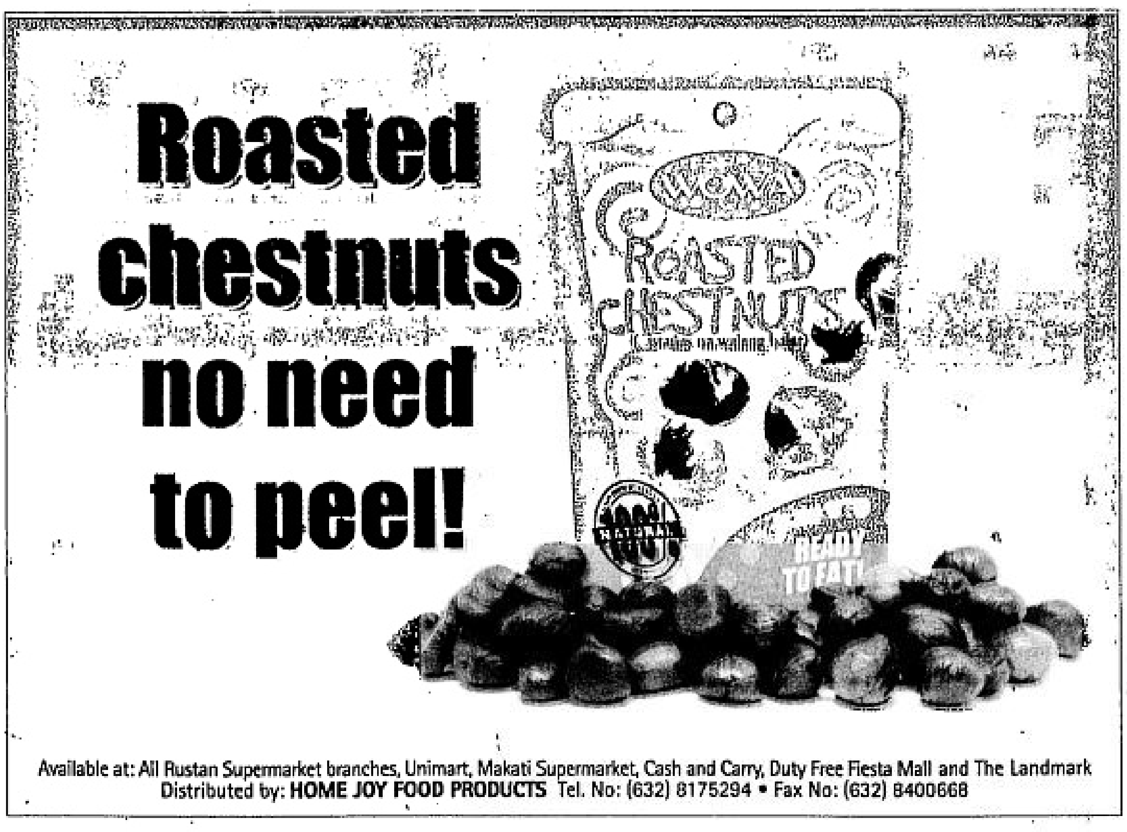

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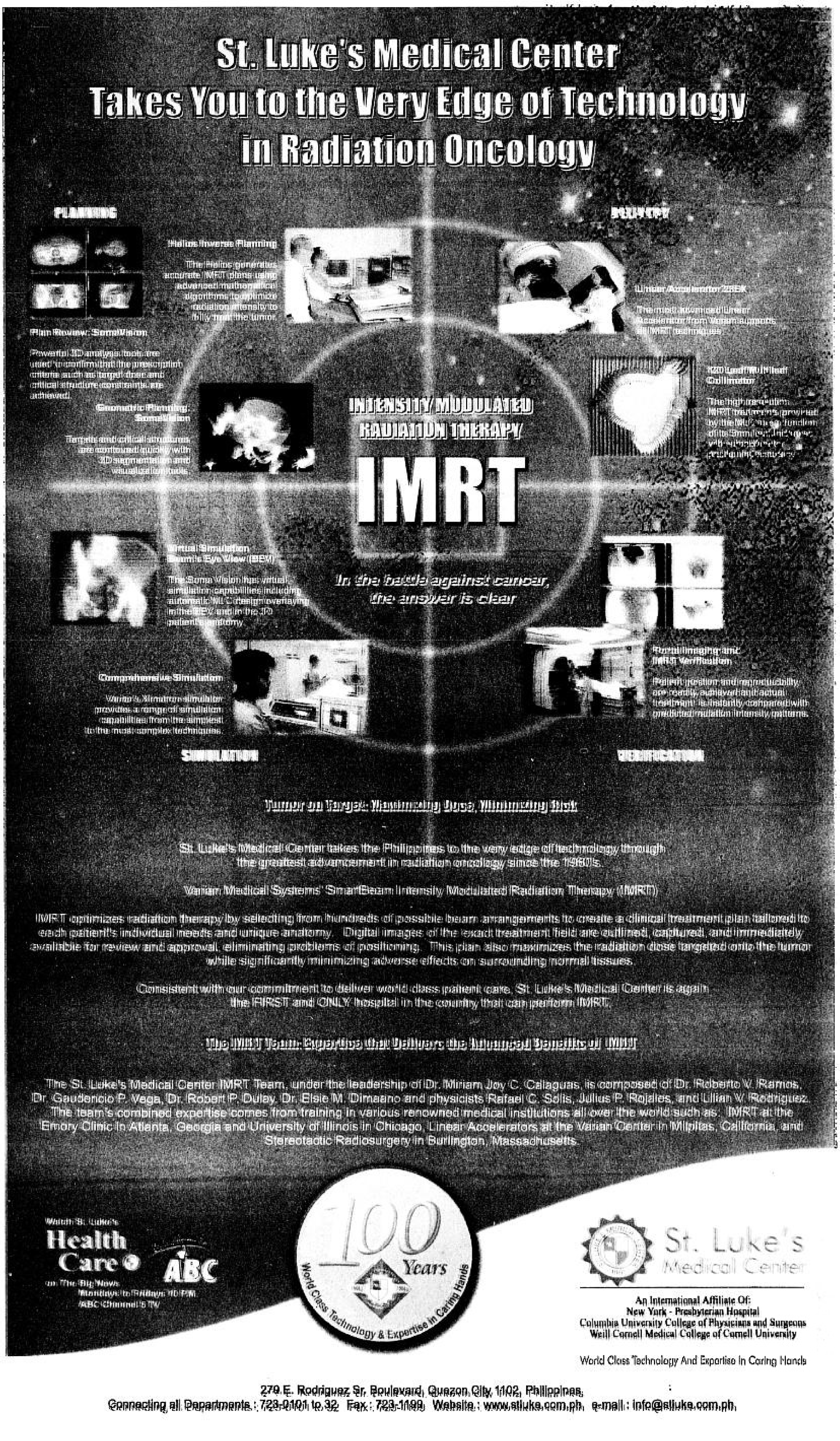

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

EU constitution summit collapses

BRUSSELS—The European Union was faced Sunday with months of debilitating uncertainty after summit talks designed to thrash out a new constitution collapsed in spectacular fashion.

After two years of drafting the historic charter, which is supposed to equip the bloc for its biggest enlargement yet, EU leaders Saturday threw in the towel in the face of an intractable dispute over national voting rights.

Intensive attempts by the EU's Italian presidency to broker a deal foundered on fierce demands by Poland and Spain to retain the generous influence they secured in the Nice Treaty three years ago.

France and Germany, on the other side of the divide, also refused to budge on their demands for a constitution that will allow an enlarged 25-nation EU of 450 million people to work effectively.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi conceded defeat after seeing his compromise proposals on the voting rights question fail to break the impasse, describing the disagreement as "total."

The fiasco revived talk of the EU's six founding members—Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands—going their own way in a "two-speed" EU.

French President Jacques Chirac renewed his demand for "pioneer groups" of EU members, while German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said a twin-track Europe might be "the logical consequence" if the new constitution is not adopted.

The mess now passes to Ireland, which replaces Italy in the EU hotseat next month.

But Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern said he would wait until March before reconvening the inter-governmental conference (IGC) on the constitution.

"I don't think before March there will be any agreement. There's not enough political will to find an agreement," he said. "This is a huge project. This is a fundamental change for the whole of Europe. It's not unusual on such a big project that people have to reflect on it."

The timescale indicated by Ahern makes it unlikely that the new constitution will be adopted in time for the "big bang" enlargement on May 1, when 10 more countries from central Europe and the Mediterranean are set to join the EU.

The treaty must be ratified in all 25 present and future member states, including via at least six national referendums, before it can take effect. *AFP*

TENOR AND BRIDE
Italian opera singer Luciano Pavarotti kisses his bride Nicoletta Mantovani after their wedding at Modena's Teatro Comunale, northern Italy, Dec. 13. Pavarotti married his longtime partner and producer Mantovani in a song-filled, celebrity-studded ceremony. AP

Saddam calls up wife, son once a week, report says

LONDON—Saddam Hussein's second wife, who lives with the ousted Iraqi leader's only surviving son under an assumed name in Lebanon, said her husband calls or writes to them at least once a week, a London newspaper reported Sunday.

"If he cannot say something in detail on the telephone, I know I will receive a letter in two to three days giving me an explanation," Samira Shahbandar told The Sunday Times in an interview.

After the Iraq war in March, Shahbandar—described by the paper as mysterious and the closest of Saddam's four wives—said she crossed the border into Syria, then travelled to Beirut where she was given a Lebanese passport.

Now living under the name of Hadija, she said she expected to move to Paris next month.

She said Saddam, ousted as Iraq's president following the US-led war on Iraq in March, had given her five million dollars in cash and a hoard of jewellery and gold before sending her and his 21-year-old son, Ali, over the border into Syria.

Ali, Saddam's only surviving son, has changed his name to Hassan, according to his Lebanese passport.

Saddam's two elder sons, Qusay and Uday, were killed by US forces in the war. Their mother and Saddam's first wife, Sajida, is thought to be in Syria, the paper said. *AFP*

US condition forces deferment of nuke crisis talks

TOKYO—Six-nation nuclear crisis talks will not resume this month as the United States is insisting the abolition of North Korea's nuclear weapons is open to international scrutiny, Japanese press reports said Sunday.

The plan for holding, by the end of this year, a second round of the talks, which were initiated in Beijing last August, has been abandoned "for technical reasons," the TV Asahi network reported citing a Japanese diplomatic source.

Foreign Ministry press secretary Hatsuhisa Takashima told AFP that he had no information on the reported delay.

The influential daily Asahi Shimbun said the United States and its allies, South Korea and Japan, had revised a Chinese-drafted joint statement for the talks because it was seen as ambiguous on the "verifiable and irreversible" manner of dismantling the nuclear program.

The revised draft statement was sent on Saturday to China, the daily said quoting a Japanese government official. Russia is also a party to the six-nation process. *AFP*

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Empty train goes 45 km on own steam

JAKARTA, Indonesia—An empty train travelled 45 km with no driver at the engine and eight wagons in tow before coming to a halt in the center of the Indonesian capital, a report said Sunday.

The electronic commuter train, parked in the town of Bogor, came to life at around 3:50 a.m. Friday and headed towards Jakarta at about 65 km per hour, the state Antara news agency said, quoting station sources.

A railway employee who saw the train begin to move climbed on board in an effort to stop the locomotive but could not enter the driving compartment.

An Indonesian state railways spokesperson, Patria Sutiyoso, said "technical problems" were behind the unscheduled journey, which caused no casualties or damage.

Another spokes person, Zainal Abidin, told Antara there had been no electricity supply to the train and no driver on board.

Bogor is at least 190 meters (630 feet) above sea level while Jakarta is at the coast. The train came to a halt after it failed to climb an incline in the Cikini area of Central Jakarta.

Sutiyoso said the railway company, PT Kereta Api Indonesia (KAI), would investigate the incident.

Bogor staff alerted all stations and railway crossing posts along the way once they realized the train had left. *AFP*

Azerbaijan in mourning, awaits body of Aliyev

BAKU—The body of Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's former president who ruled the country with an iron fist for over three decades, was being flown home Sunday for a state funeral after he died of suspected heart complications in a US clinic.

Aliyev's death, announced late Friday, triggered a week of national mourning in the oil-rich former Soviet republic where he is widely respected and known by the affectionate nickname of "Baba" or grandfather.

Sources close to the presidential administration said Sunday the US-chartered plane carrying his body would touch down in the Azeri capital, Baku, about mid-morning in readiness for a funeral on Monday.

Aliyev died in a private clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, where he was being treated for heart failure. He left Azerbaijan on July 8 for medical treatment, first in Turkey, and then in the US, but never returned home.

His son Ilham—who succeeded him in a disputed presidential election in October—was expected to meet the coffin at the airport, the source said.

Analysts say the younger Aliyev, who is 41 and a political novice, will struggle to rule the fractious country without his father to guide him and protect him from political rivals.

Heydar Aliyev, a former general in the KGB, was the dominant influence in Azerbaijan's political life for some 34 years, starting in 1969 when he was appointed Communist Party chief of the then Soviet republic.

He became the first Muslim to serve on the Politburo, the Soviet Union's ruling body. He returned to newly-independent Azerbaijan in 1993 as it threatened to dissolve into civil war.

Aliyev's critics said he was a tyrant who rigged elections and repressed political opponents while allowing his cronies to embezzle Azerbaijan's considerable oil wealth.

Yet his supporters—and even some detractors—credit him with bringing stability and relative prosperity to his tiny country on the Caspian Sea by making ties with the West and developing offshore oil reserves.

Hundreds of thousands of people were expected to queue to view Aliyev's body at a lying-in-state on Monday, to be followed by a burial in a plot overlooking the Caspian Sea. *AFP*

Militant Saudi cleric urges halt to bombings

RIYADH—One of three radical Saudi clerics arrested in May for promoting Muslim militancy has become the third to call on militants behind a series of bombings in the Gulf kingdom to lay down their arms.

In an interview broadcast by Saudi state television late on Saturday Sheikh Ahmed al-Khalidi said there was no just cause for them to fight in Saudi Arabia.

Khalidi's prime time televised comments, echoing those of two other clerics last month, are part of Saudi Arabia's battle to crush a wave of militant violence in the world's biggest oil exporter. None of the clerics have been reported released.

Eighteen people died last month when suspected al-Qaida bombers blew up an expatriate compound in Riyadh. Six months earlier 35 people were killed in triple suicide bombings.

Saudi authorities said they foiled another attack barely two weeks after the Nov. 9 bombing and last week the government published names and pictures of 26 most wanted suspects.

"We tell them (militants) that they must obey God within themselves, that they must lay down their arms and return to society, their brothers and their families," Khalidi said.

"There are no enemies here for them to carry arms against and there is no jihad here and no fighters. We only have those (non-Muslims) under the protection of the state and Muslims whose blood, wealth and honor should be safeguarded."

Asked about calls by al-Qaida's leader, Saudi-born Osama bin Laden, to rid the Arabian peninsula of Jews and Christians, Khalidi said it was for the government, not individuals, to decide the issue.

Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, is home to around six million foreign workers and their families—around a quarter of the kingdom's population. The foreign presence, coupled until recently by the stationing of thousands of US troops on Saudi soil, has been a prime grievance of the militants. "We must first decide whether these people came peacefully or not, and such judgment is not left to individuals or groups but to rulers," Khalidi said. *Reuters*

Car bomb blast kills 18 at police station in Iraq

KHALDIYAH, Iraq—A car bomb killed 18 policemen and wounded 30 more at a police station in western Iraq on Sunday, police lieutenant Faiz Mohammad Motab and witnesses said.

"An explosion went off near the gate of the station," he said. "It killed 18 and wounded 30 policemen, including senior officers and the ranks," he said.

"There's a big hole outside the gate about three or four meters across and more than two meters deep, and the outside wall was knocked down.

"We don't know what caused the blast," the lieutenant admitted, although witnesses earlier said it was a car bomb.

The casualties were rushed to the nearby Ramadi general hospital, 100 km from Baghdad, witnesses said.

The blast left a charred wreck of a car and destroyed two other cars, AFP correspondents at the scene said.

It went off about 8:40 a.m. at the station on the main road about 20 km to the east of Ramadi, a military spokesperson in Baghdad said.

US armored vehicles blocked off the area and two tanks parked on the main road while two helicopters hovered overhead.

More than 100 US troops had taken up position around the compound preventing anyone from approaching.

"There were no coalition casualties," the spokesperson said, adding that a US military quick reaction force had been sent to the town situated between the rebel cities of Ramadi and Fallujah where ousted president Saddam Hussein still commands loyalty.

The spokesperson had no information on Iraqi casualties.

About 150 policemen worked at the station.

On Sept. 15, the police chief of Khaldiyah, Col. Khdayyir Ali Mukhlif, was killed when three assailant opened fire at his car.

The explosion was the latest in a string of attacks on Iraqi police and others seen as cooperating with the US-led occupation. Scores of Iraqis have been killed.

AFP, Reuters

Coalition addresses poor pay after walkout

BAGHDAD—The US-led coalition is reviewing pay for soldiers of the New Iraqi Army after suffering the embarrassment of a mass walkout from the very first battalion as the American post-war combat death toll nears 200.

With the coalition counting on the Iraqi force to assume ever greater responsibility for security, the US military commander in Iraq, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, was obliged to explain how 400 of the 700 men had already quit the job.

Sanchez strongly denied that the soldiers left because they were afraid of being targeted by insurgents.

Married soldiers said they could not support their families on just $60 a month. Top pay is around $180 for a colonel.

"We're working to review the pay scales at this point and I think we'll have some decisions in the coming weeks," Sanchez admitted Saturday.

The general said the battalion, which passed out in October after a nine-week basic course, would continue to train and claimed morale remained high.

Sanchez said he did not see any letup in the coalition's efforts to recruit an Iraqi security force.

"I believe our targets for building the New Iraqi Army are still valid," he said.

The coalition is hoping to build an Iraqi army of about 40,000 soldiers in 27 motorized infantry battalions by next September.

Sanchez added that a new 550-strong Iraqi Civil Defense Corps battalion, made up of recruits sent by Iraqi political parties, should be on the ground battling Saddam Hussein loyalists by the end of the month.

He stressed the battalion would be under American command and the political party members would be grouped in integrated units. *AFP*

Roh says he is prepared to quit over fund scandal

SEOUL—South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun said Sunday he was prepared to quit over a political slush fund scandal that has emerged as the latest threat to his already troubled career.

Roh said that if a probe into last year's illegal election campaign funding revealed his aides had accepted more undeclared cash than his rivals he would resign, according to presidential spokesperson Yoon Tai-young.

"I will step down and quit politics if my camp is found to have improperly accepted funds totaling more than a tenth of the donations the GNP took," he was quoted as saying.

Hit by corruption scandals implicating his associates, Roh has already called for a national referendum on his rule, saying he would resign if he lost the vote.

At talks with political party leaders, Roh expressed "shame" for the implication of his associates in the slush fund scandal, the spokesperson said.

He urged opposition parties to cooperate with the prosecution's probe but said he was ready to accept an independent inquiry of his camp when state prosecutors complete their investigation.

Prosecutors last week questioned two of Roh's close confidants on charges of taking illegal funds.

Roh, a former human rights lawyer who was elected on an anti-corruption platform, has been hit by dwindling public ratings, labor unrest and a hostile parliament.

His leadership was undercut further in early December when the opposition-controlled parliament overrode Roh's veto of an independent slush fund inquiry.

State prosecutors have combed the books of giant business corporations. The GNP, however, insists it cannot trust prosecutors to conduct a fair inquiry.

The probe has also ensnared opposition politicians. A key aide to the GNP's unsuccessful presidential candidate, Lee Hoi-chang, was arrested last week.

Illegal political donations have long been part of South Korean politics as businesses fear that without contributions they would be subject to punitive tax demands or attacks in parliament.

Political observers say Roh's government is less corrupt than past administrations but weak support in parliament made him vulnerable to attacks from his opponents.

Roh's backing became more fragmented in September when loyalists broke from the former ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) to launch the pro-government Uri Party in September. *AFP*

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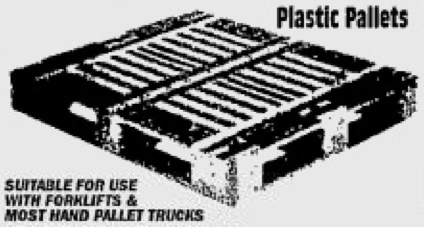
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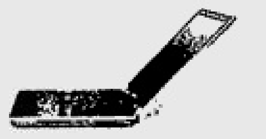
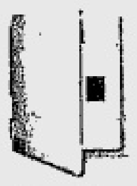

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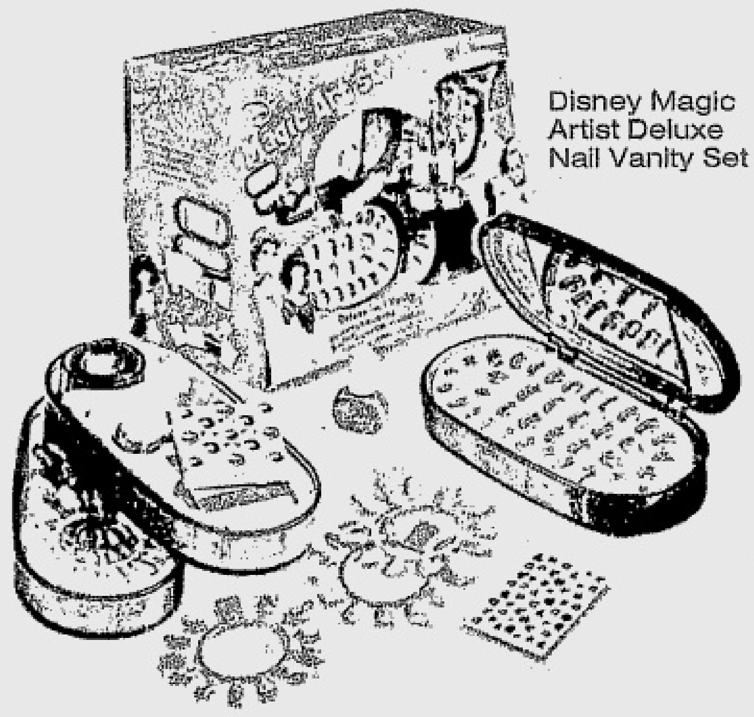
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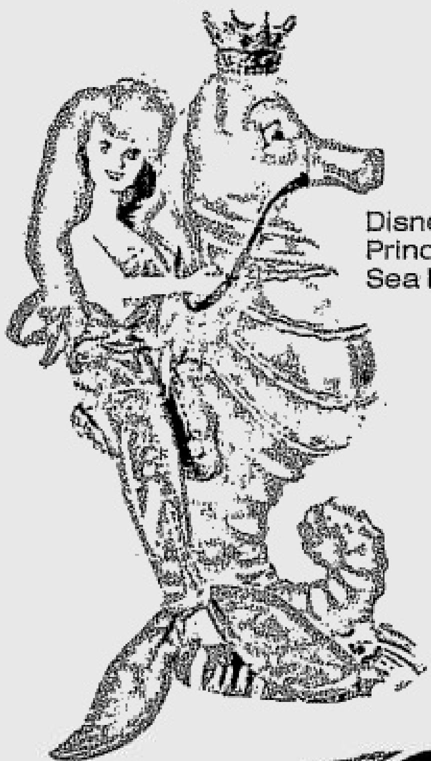
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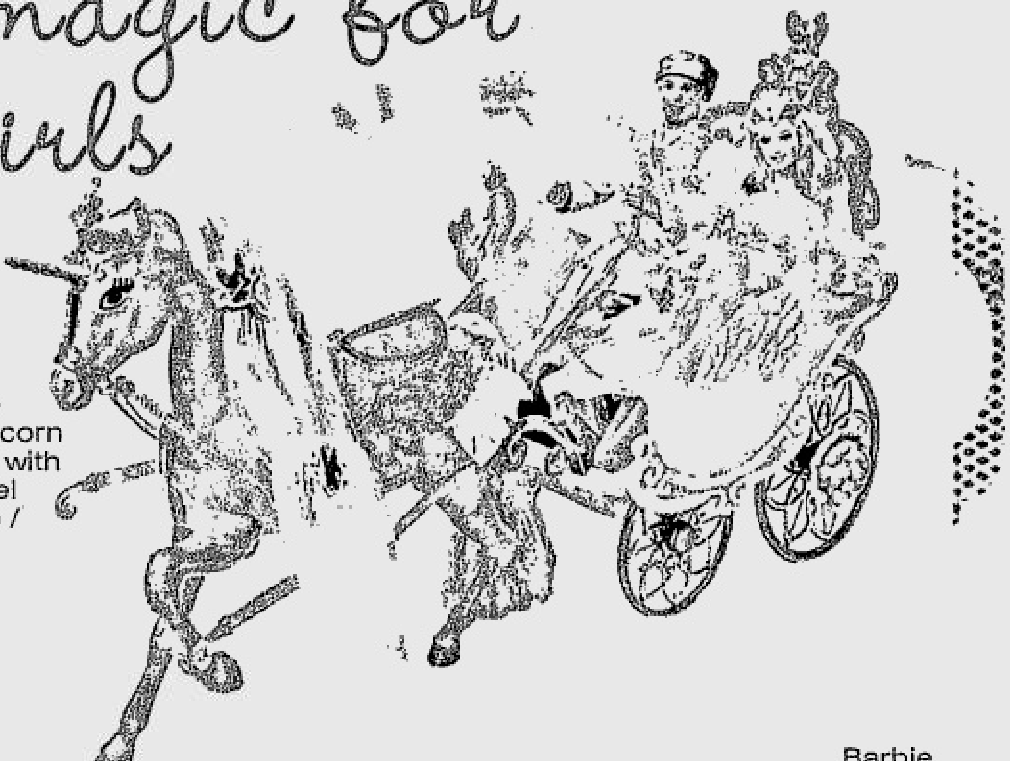
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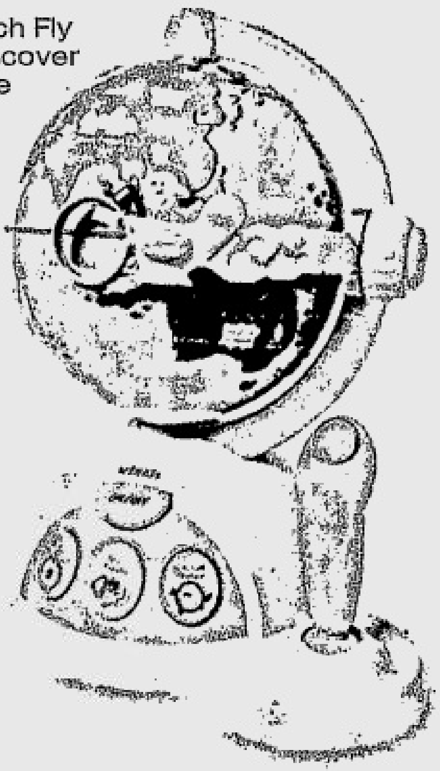

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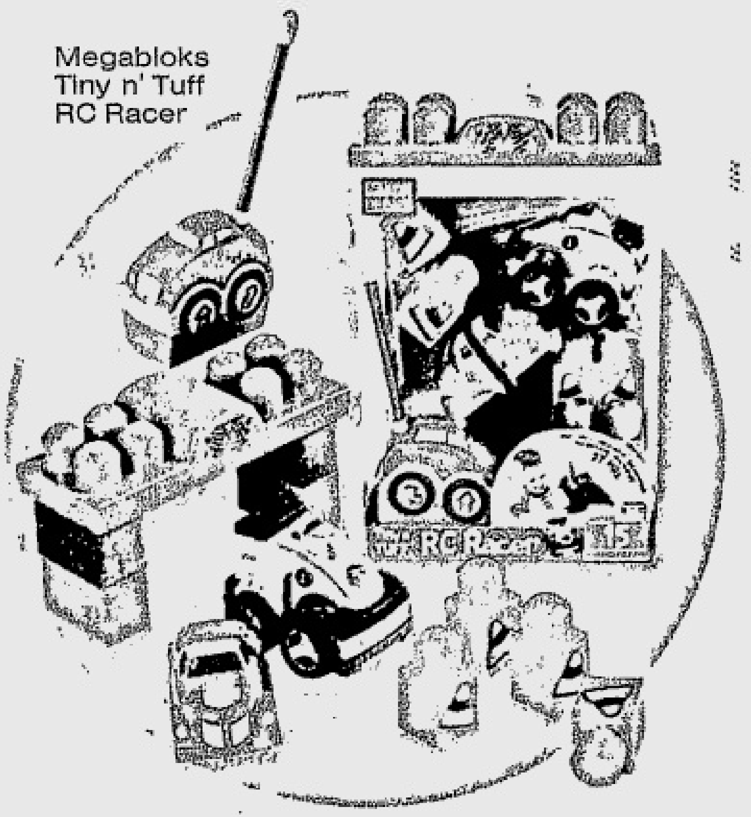

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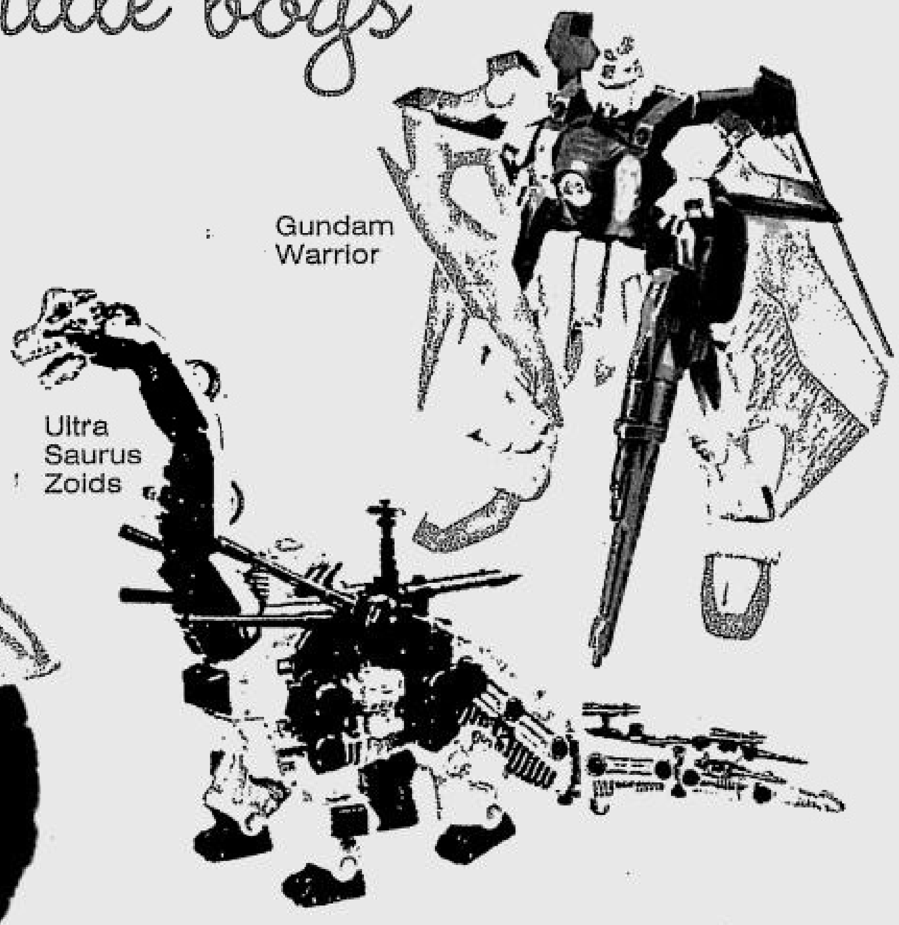

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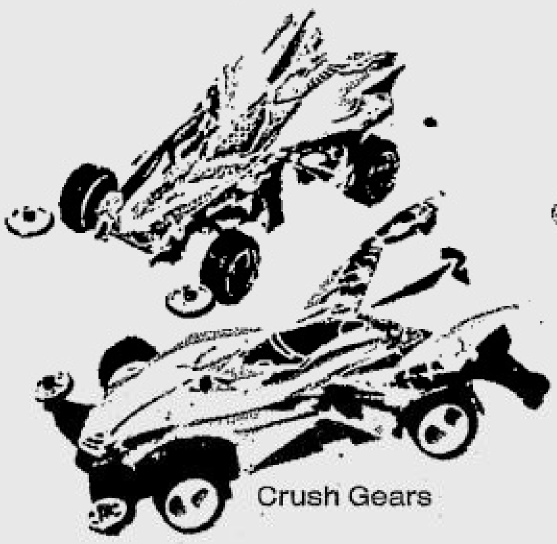

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No show

IT could be that Fernando Poe Jr. deliberately missed his own proclamation last Wednesday as the "united opposition's" standard-bearer because he did not like to be associated with the political has-beens who staged the event. This is the view of some political analysts and veteran journalists, who think the popular actor was cunning enough to know that the resulting images—a fresh face surrounded by tired old ones—would be certain box-office poison.

EDITORIALS

In this view, Poe's no show was nothing less than a declaration of independence, from traditional politicians and all that they stand for.

There is something to this line of thinking. Almost six years after his equally famous best friend and fellow actor was elected to Malacañang, Poe is celebrated for a continuing act of negation: He never asked Joseph Estrada for any favors. In contrast, the usual suspects who showed up at the Hotel Intercontinental to proclaim him had compromised themselves during Estrada's abbreviated term in office: the likes of Johnny Enrile, Gringo Honasan, Ernie Maceda, Tito Sotto, Boy Morales, Jinggoy Estrada. These are not political virgins waiting wisely, lamps in hand, for their bridegroom to appear at any hour of the night. They are more like pallbearers at a political funeral.

For Poe to be seen in their company would have been to get his campaign off to a morbid start.

Sadly, however, this view is almost certainly wishful thinking. It is like the political advice and newspaper columns in early 1998 that romanticized the candidacy of Estrada, painting him as a knight in proven Teflon, riding to battle in a shining jeepney.

In all likelihood, the truth about Poe's no show lies not in his politics but in his personality.

Not there

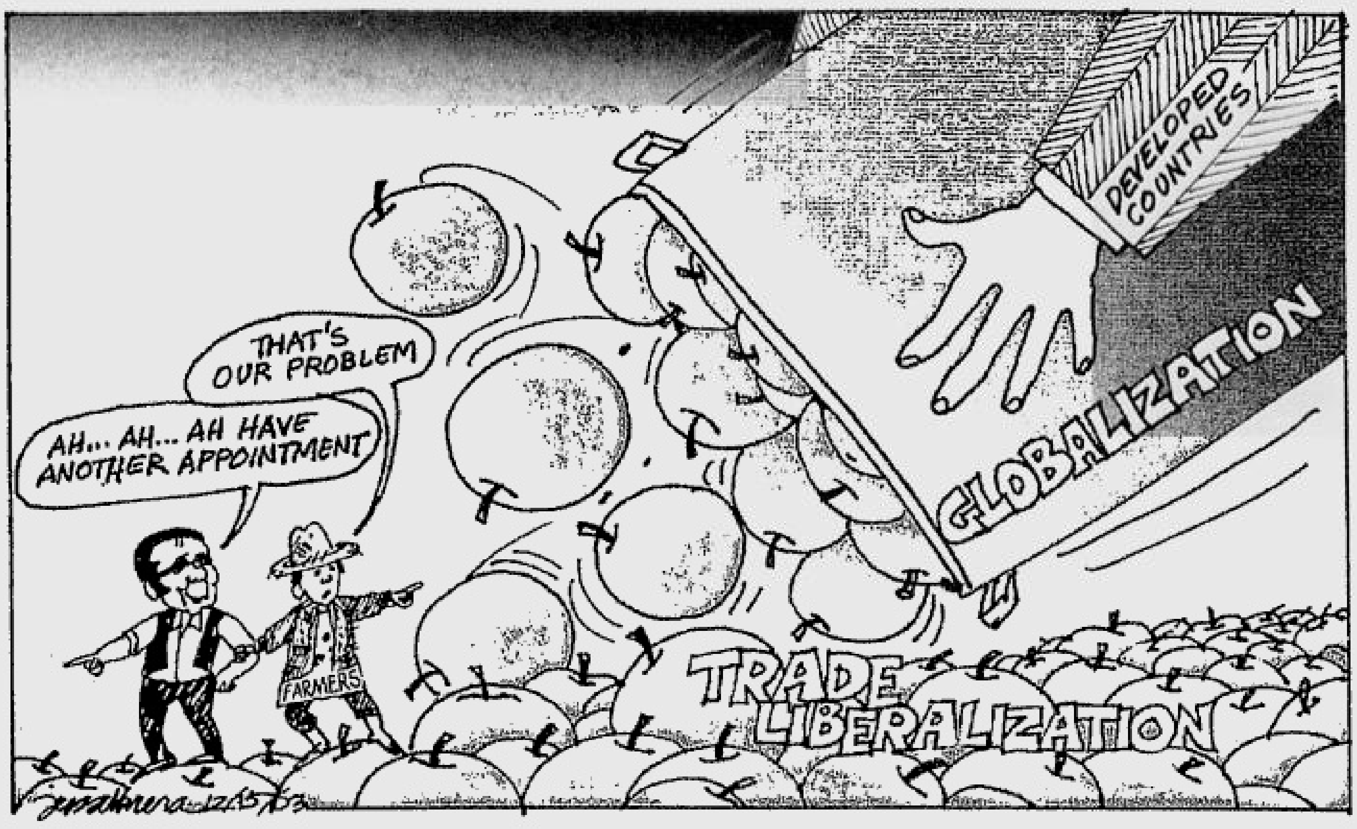
THE MOVIE director Cirio Santiago, in an attempt to explain the deep respect, even the awe, that Fernando Poe Jr. enjoys in his chosen profession, told magazine editor and INQUIRER columnist Jo-Ann Maglipon the answer may lie in yet another act of negation: "He isn't there." Santiago meant that Poe does not often show up at show business functions, thus—and here we elaborate—putting a premium not only on his privacy but on his very presence. He is the unrivalled leader in his industry (not even Estrada came close) because he understands that the exercise of leadership is built on a foundation of mystery. In the literature of power, mystery means that the leader is both with us and above us, both one with the people and apart from them.

It has been Poe's good fortune that one of his defining personal characteristics, the fierce sense of privacy that distinguishes the actor and film director in his very public line of work, has proved useful in his other role as industry leader. There is a perfect fit, as it were, between personality trait and leadership skill.

It looks likely, therefore, that Poe did not show up at the proclamation—the second time since Sen. Panfilo Lacson's in Club Filipino that a group calling itself the united opposition noisily chose a presidential candidate—because that is what he does, or rather, that is what he doesn't do. He doesn't show up.

Instead of adding to his legend, however, Poe's no show only fueled more doubts over the staying power, the will to win, of the country's most reluctant candidate for President.

The question now is, Can one be an effective political leader in the same, now-you-see-me, now-you-don't way? It is certain that a President Poe would not even think of showing up in the middle of a Mandy Moore concert. But then again, it is almost equally certain he would not show up on many other, more important occasions. In the last two weeks alone, Poe has failed to attend the biggest annual business conference, a scheduled meeting with his main rival (since rescheduled), and his own proclamation. What he hopes to do as an absentee president is a mystery.



After FPJ, here comes APJ

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

NEVER mind FPJ, here comes APJ, says APJ himself—Aquilino Pimentel Jr. APJ is running not for senator, not for vice president, but for president no less. And while FPJ has no policy platform—yet—APJ has one firmly established. Easy to remember, too, because its acronym spells FREEDOM.

Like singing the alphabet song (you know, "A you're adorable, B you're so beautiful, C you're a cutie full of charms...") APJ explained what each letter of his FREEDOM platform stands for.

"F" is for federalism, his current passion. He wants a federal form of government, just like the United States, to give the regions more autonomy. "R" stands for reforms—in government, in the police force, in the judicial system, etc. "E" is for economics, which is pretty obvious, because all our troubles start with a depressed economy. When the government and the people have no money, you can't do anything. The second "E" stands for education—and he is not referring to FPJ's lack of it, either. In fact, because of a faulty educational system, students graduate from college with very little education, and the dropouts with common sense fare better in the outside world—yes, just like FPJ. "D" is for debt, of which we already have too much and which our great, great-grandchildren are fated to pay. "O" is for the OFWs, the overseas workers whose remittances are the only inputs keeping us afloat. The government should pay them more attention in gratitude. And "M" is of course for Mindanao, APJ's home. Mindanao can be the breadbasket of the Philippines, APJ says, but the government is not developing it. And so instead of products, what do we get out of Mindanao? Bullets and bombs.

All of these letters put together spell FREEDOM, which is what we will all reap if APJ becomes president—freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom from debt, freedom from ignorance, etc.

And freedom from corrupt and greedy politicians? Yes, that too.

* * *

Another presidential candidate, former Sen. Raul Roco, the man who is always surrounded by flowers, doesn't care for APJ's federalism, but he is determined not to have a parliamentary form of government, which is JDV's desperate but doomed desire.

***Ngayon pa lang*, we see politicians jumping from one party to another like so many locusts, what more when we have a parliamentary system when it is the majority party that runs the whole government? A parliamentary system is for countries with strong political parties espousing definite ideologies and whose members are loyal to their parties. But in the Philippines, turncoatism is deemed a virtue instead of a vice and political parties are always tempting politicians with the spoils of victory if they join now. With the political jumping insects that we have, the parliamentary system will never work for us. For JDV maybe, but not for the nation.**

The other thing that Roco said last week is that "we are in a de facto dictatorship," just like the Marcos regime. Well, not quite yet, but we're almost there.

One proof is what this government is doing to harass and persecute Judge Theresa Yadao of the Quezon City RTC for dismissing the Kuratong Baleleng case against Sen. Panfilo Lacson, himself the subject of persecution by this government. This case has already been dismissed five times, from the RTC all the way up to the Supreme Court, but the government keeps reviving it as though it were Lazarus.

It was first dismissed by the Sandiganbayan, then by the RTC for "lack of probable cause." The government elevated the case to the Court of Appeals which affirmed the dismissal. Not happy with that, the government appealed to the Supreme Court which also affirmed the dismissal. The government filed a motion for reconsideration and *voila!* the tribunal made a complete turnabout, revived the case and sent it back for trial to the RTC. That's when the case fell on the lap of Judge Yadao.

Yadao dismissed the case a fifth time. But the government will not accept any decision that is not a conviction and incarceration of its nemesis: Lacson, even if the Kuratong Baleleng case is revived a hundred times. So it filed a motion asking Yadao to inhibit herself from the case, but before she could decide, it filed an administrative case against her, seeking her suspension—a clear case of forum-shopping. The government clearly wants a judge who will convict Lacson. During the Marcos regime, enemies like Lacson just disappear or are detained incommunicado. The Macapagal regime is not doing that yet, but it is getting there. It is using the judicial system (what is the Supreme Court, which is so quick to protect one of its own, doing?) to get the same results.

The Marcos dictatorship persecuted its enemies shamelessly. The Macapagal-Arroyo "de facto dictatorship" is doing the same thing just as shamelessly.

* * *

A British national, one Paul Bernard Chaston, has been detained by the Bureau of Immigration, because of several charges filed against him. But he probably has powerful backers because Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo is under extreme pressure to release him. High-ranking officials from Malacañang, the Department of Justice, Pagcor, Isafp and a judge have all, on different occasions, interceded for the foreigner.

Why? What are their connections with him? Why are they interceding for him, even at the risk of violating the law? As a gauge of her integrity, Domingo is not succumbing to the pressure.

Filipinas

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"FILIPINAS" is the title of Joel Lamangan's latest opus, the script written by Roy Iglesias. The "Filipinas" there is the name of a family, whose tale it tells. But it is also of course the name of the country, whose tale it also tells. The story of Filipinas the family is meant in fact to be a microcosm of Filipinas the nation.

Filipinas, the family, is headed by a widowed matriarch whose children have become variously housekeeper, gone to the United States, worked as caregiver in Israel, served in the AFP, turned radical, and become a (not very successful) businesswoman managing an onion farm. A veritable cross-section of Philippine society.

The family reunites for the marriage of the youngest daughter shortly before Christmas. In the background are various references to recent turbulent events—the Oakwood mutiny and the Naia takeover, the visit by George W. Bush, the violent dispersals of rallies—which have been tearing the country apart. In the foreground are the individual problems of the family members, which are tearing their family apart.

Maricel Soriano sees herself as the family doormat, sacrificing her own happiness for her mother and siblings. Richard Gomez is fleeing the IRS. Dawn Zulueta is awash in guilt after a friend dies in a bombing in Israel and just as awash in resentment at a freeloading husband. Wendell Ramos, who seems patterned after Antonio Trillanes, is a young officer who exposes corruption in the AFP and draws flak from his superiors. Victor Neri is constantly at odds with Gomez, whom he accuses of looking at the country through American eyes. Aiko Melendez is almost bankrupt, she can't compete with cheap imports. And Armida Siguion-Reyna entrusts everything to God, or to the local priest.

Tragedy after tragedy visits the family, and soon they find themselves at one another's throats. In the end, however, when all seems lost, when Armida's character lies comatose at the hospital, they find it in their hearts to forgive and forget and become a family again.

The movie's strength lies in its ambition and awareness of the complexities of current Philippine life. Like Gil Portes' "Homecoming," Lamangan's "Filipinas" is not afraid to go boldly where others have not gone before. More than "Homecoming," "Filipinas" aspires for epic range, its subject being nothing less than contemporary Philippines as seen through the prism of a Filipino family. One is tempted to say a "typical Filipino family," but there is little that is typical about this family—but I leave that for later. To meet the challenge, Lamangan has assembled a crew of big stars—a "casting coup" it's been touted, with reason—who have been equal to the task. Armida is an inspired choice for matriarch. The other actors might truly be her kids, her fondness for them shows.

Its appreciation of the impingement of the globe on this country is patent, in its depiction of the culture that has arisen from OFWs, interracial or intercultural marriages (Melendez marries a Bombay in a fairly elaborate ritual), and the dire effects of globalization on local agriculture. Put side by side with a lingering insular (indeed feudal) religion- or tradition-bound outlook, it does bring certain contrasts to light, if not to stark relief.

The movie's weakness is that it tries to say too much, and ends up saying little. Allegorical tales are not easy to tell. Had the movie taken on the aspect of a parable or fable, where the characters are representations rather than flesh-and-blood individuals, it might have done better. As it is, it takes on the aspect of resolute realism, which compels it to flesh out characters, which it does not always do successfully. The characters do not escape being representations of social forces, notwithstanding the effort to individualize them by giving them a past—which in any case is more verbalized than dramatized, giving it little emotional resonance—and often look and sound like ideas rather than people clashing. The dramatic moments do not end up being intensely dramatic because we grasp them more with the head than with the heart.

The "Filipinas-es," as I said, are not a typical family. They are far too steep a cross-section of Philippine society for them to be one. The movie draws so close, or so mirror-like, a parallel with Philippine society that the characters have little space to breathe. The acting is generally excellent, but the actors do not have much to work on. The extent of the effort to draw a near-exact parallel with Philippine society you see when Armida's character, the matriarch, becomes comatose, which is too pat a reference to Inang Bayan's present plight. When everyone starts debating whether to agree to remove her life support system or not, you know they are debating whether to agree to remove Inang Bayan's life support system—overseas work, US intervention, and so on—or not.

That makes the hopeful ending a little less hopeful. Most people I know who have a blood clot on their brain and have the tubes taken off their mouths and noses die peremptorily, not recover slowly. It's a wonderful idea, people discovering the best in themselves in the worst of circumstances, people binding through the widening gyre, but I don't know that it comes naturally here.

Many readers will notice that I usually end columns like this with "Still, watch the movie, it's worth it." I mean it. These movies need our patronage. It is worth rewarding people who take these risks with our critical appreciation. That is how they will make more and better movies in future. If we can do that amid our truly trying circumstances today, despite the temptation to give in to Hollywood blockbusters, then the message of "Filipinas" will not have been lost.

Disabled bag harvest of medals in Delhi

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FRANTIC efforts are being exerted by opposition leaders to bring rivals Fernando Poe Jr. and Panfilo Lacson to an accommodation, as they realize the opposition can kiss its restoration dream goodbye if they don't unite. Word from the grapevine, however, is that one of the conditions sought by the Lacson camp, in return for his sliding to No. 2, is that he'll get six plum Cabinet posts for his appointees. These include the Departments of Justice, Defense, Finance, Interior and Local Government and Foreign Affairs. If this is true, it would mean emasculating the Poe presidency, as these are the most influential posts in the Cabinet. Besides, it is doubtful if FPJ's handlers, Senators Edgardo Angara and Vicente Sotto, would relinquish their hold. Lacson has consistently denied that he has any intention of sliding down to vice president, but my information is reliable.

* * *

The Philippines scored a respectable fourth place in the SEA Games, and I join in lauding our athletes for the harvest of 48 gold medals, 54 silvers and 75 bronzes, an improvement from our fifth place with 31 gold medals in Malaysia two years ago, our worst performance in the Games. Part of the credit goes to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, who raised funds for the athletes and babysat them for moral support. But it only means we have to strive harder in 2005 especially since we will be the host by then.

There's a lot of crowing about our team's having beaten Malaysia to the fourth slot, after the latter bagged only 44 gold medals versus our 48 and ended up fifth. But we really ought to do better than Malaysia as we have a far larger population than that country of less than 20 million and therefore a far bigger crop of athletes to choose from; we should be competing with topnotchers Vietnam and Thailand whose populations are comparable to ours in size. It only means we have to work harder in the sports arena.

* * *

Hardly noticed but equally distinguished was the participation of the RP delegation in the 6th International Abilympics in New Delhi, India last Nov. 22-29. Our delegation landed fifth among 34 participating countries, bagging seven major awards. What makes the Abilympics, which is held every four years, special is that it's the only international competition for abilities among the disabled sector and a lot of them come from poor families. The Philippines' recent harvest of medals shows that, as Rosie Lovely Tecson-Romulo, wife of Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and chair of Abilympics Philippines, who accompanied the delegation to India, put it, "Filipinos are among the best in the world in terms of technical and vocational skills."

Here's the RP team's output: two gold medals in painting bagged by Jose de la Cruz for water color and oil on canvas; two silver medals by Manny Bagsit in flower arrangement and Danilo Reuyan in waste reuse; three bronzes by Dennis Balan in photography, Ervin Reyes in creating web pages and Dante Porsuelo in painting, oil on canvas. Their stories are heartwarming. Winner Dennis Balan began as a deaf dancer trained by Earthsavers Movement, the Unesco-awarded ecological group founded by Secretary Heherson Alvarez, but later Balan shifted to photography and now has his little studio. Our ambassador to India, Lula del Rosario, liked the paintings of deaf artist De la Cruz so much that she commissioned him to do three paintings for the embassy.

The RP team's successful participation was made possible through the close cooperation among Abilympics Philippines, whose board of advisers is headed by Bea Zobel, Tesda, the DSWD and the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons.

* * *

I recently ran into PNP Deputy Director and former NCR commander Reynaldo Velasco and it's heartening to note both his lack of rancor over his removal from that post and his new assignment as chief of the Philippine Center for Transnational Crime (PCTC). He stressed that contrary to reports that he was among those who fought reassignment, he immediately set the turnover to his 1971 classmate Gen. Ricardo de Leon upon notification of his relief. Moreover, he says with the characteristic naughty twinkle of his eyes that destiny may still beckon to him, as he will retire in May of 2005 yet—meaning, he has all the time to wait for the top PNP post. He also notes that the PCTC has been the launching pad of some PNP chiefs, among them Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza. Velasco says the PCTC will give him the opportunity to travel and its more relaxed pace is most welcome after the NCR hot seat in two very trying events: the Oakwood mutiny and the Bush state visit. And yes, no more phone calls from Someone at all hours of the day.

* * *

It was fascinating to listen to Velasco as he recalled the tensions of the visit of US President Bush and why he was 45 minutes late for his Congress address. He noted that at one point US National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice was so adamant against letting Bush motor to the Batasan and wanted him flown by chopper, but to Velasco this would have been a setback before the world. He said he guaranteed the US chief executive's safety, but Rice insisted on having a minimum of three lanes cleared for the Bush convoy or nothing. In the end, he says, "I gave her seven lanes, including the makeshift lanes cleared by the PNP trucks whose flaps were lowered as the US convoy passed by." Velasco recalled how he was scolded by President Macapagal-Arroyo at the height of the tension that afternoon for having allowed the demonstrators some space near the Batasan. But he recalled that after Bush left, GMA called him up and told him, "You can now sleep soundly" and that she was taking back everything she said earlier. That, he mused, was her way of apologizing, and he recalls telling her to please relieve him of his post.

GMA's heritage grades

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

MY fearless forecast is that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will lose the election. And it is not only because of a "winnability" problem over Fernando Poe Jr., but partly because of the image she has brought upon herself in her presidency. The picture we get of GMA is that of a scheming wheeler-dealer who will sacrifice principles for the sake of the only thing that appears to matter to her: ambition. In other words, she wants another turn in Malacañang so badly no matter how much she denies it, and no matter what it takes. That is why the Jose Pidal issue appears credible to many. Her only consolation is that it was opened by the credibility-deficient and current *kulelat* Ping Lacson.

Word of honor is still a virtue that appears to be valued by many Filipinos. It is amazing that with her vaunted intellectual capabilities and serious working style, not to mention a postgraduate degree, GMA cannot seem to read the public mind over her turnabouts.

My own take on her is that ambition has made her so callous as to make her disparage the signs of the times which are written all over the wall. On the way to 2004, it will probably help her to recall the thwarted expectations she has brought about, and one of these is in the area of Filipino cultural heritage. If I were her teacher, I would not hesitate to give her a flat F.

Recall that in the controversy over the Mehan Gardens, GMA's intervention was sought. The Heritage Conservation Society of Manila alarm was met with stony silence. The absence of any action from her only made clear what was more important to her: the political ties with Lito Atienza. Even at that point, GMA already had her eyes on 2004.

GMA's modus operandi, in fact, speaks volumes of her unblushing use of political accommodation. She attempted to put Letty Shahani in as chair of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts despite Shahani's conspicuous lack of qualifications for the post. Obviously, GMA meant to pay her political debts to Shahani's brother, Fidel Ramos.

What is more dismal than GMA's cultural heritage record was her stance on the Huluga heritage site destruction in Mindanao. An article I had written as an open letter to her caught her attention eons after the issue erupted. And only when it caught national media attention did she move posthaste, sending the Cabinet officer for northern Mindanao, agriculture's Cito Lorenzo, to talk to us about the issue.

"The President wants to know what she can do about the issue" was Lorenzo's opening line to me. I had no doubts about Lorenzo, an old friend, who I know has a very good personal praxis of Filipino cultural heritage appreciation. But the buck does not stop with him. It certainly stops with GMA. And on the second time that Lorenzo asked us for a meeting, a local GMA aide substituting for Lorenzo who was in the middle of an Islamic wedding, flatly told us that GMA cannot afford to imperil political ties with Cagayan de Oro City Mayor Vicente Emano. Then I recalled Atienza, and shades of Mehan Garden entered my mind. Everything became clear as crystal. Right then and there I knew that this President cared for nothing but 2004.

In a second, GMA's Strong Republic crumbled for me. Just days before, in fact, Emano was found guilty by the administrative court hearing the Huluga issue as having destroyed the heritage site and was meted out, among other penalties, a fine of P50,000, which to this day he has not bothered to pay. For GMA to close her eyes on that blatant violation of cultural laws by a city mayor she perceives can deliver *masa* votes for her in 2004 was just the final proof of where her heart lies.

Well, I have bad news for her. She will not win even in Emano's turf, who is known for his despotic bent in Cagayan de Oro and whose melodramatic radio antics in two of his favorite radio stations has become the butt of jokes. To me, the GMA + Emano equation is nothing but equal to heritage destruction. And I strongly recommend to all who understand the social capital value of cultural heritage that these are people who do not deserve our votes.

Strange how the convergence of the planets can configure so that two officials with such abysmal disregard for our heritage can keep up a false front and prey on the gullibility of voters. On the day before Emano defied the law to proceed with the inauguration of the bridge built on the Huluga heritage site area, GMA was thousands of miles away, in Paris delivering a speech at the 32nd General Session of the Unesco.

In her speech, GMA was effusive in her praise to the Unesco for helping cultural preservation in the Philippines. GMA's speech was in fact punctuated by concepts such as cultural diversity, multiethnic society, ancestor sophistication, cultural traditions, knowledge society, etc. Nothing wrong with that, except for the irony of it. Little did those Unesco people know that this was an abettor of cultural terrorism who was speaking before them. Little did they know that this was a person who had a very poor grasp of cultural heritage governance. Little did they know that this was somebody who once told the Spanish ambassador to Manila not to fund historical restorations anymore because she prefers roads and bridges instead. A President who does not see the tandem role of development and cultural heritage is one for the archaic books and therefore has no business mouthing platitudes that, like her protégé Emano, keep up a false front.

GMA will not get my vote in 2004.

* * *

Comments to monta@sni.ph

Digital 'dagdag bawas'—a nonpartisan issue

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

GRAFFITI in a Massachusetts Institute of Technology restroom: *"People are smarter than computers, but computers are smarter than programmers. There are 10 kinds of people, those who understand binary arithmetic and those who do not."*

"Software" is how people get machines to do things for them—a process called "hardware automation." For example, my electronic calculator runs on a magic elixir of logic and mathematics that lets me add and subtract numbers knowing the answer will be correct. How can I be so sure? Well, I've used it countless times before, along with millions of others, without apparent errors.

The Commission on Elections will use automated counting machines to tally paper ballots in the May elections, and a telecommunications network to transmit the results to HQ, along with CDs of the data. Yet, with only five months to go, the application software packages for that crucial democratic exercise—several hundred thousand lines of obscure and opaque code—has not yet even been delivered in its final form, Comelec Chair Ben Abalos admitted last week.

My jaw dropped in amazement. Having built software for General Electric Co.'s medical systems business and military aircraft engines division (in another lifetime), I have learned the hard and painful way that 90 percent of unintended fatal problems with complex software lies in the last 10 percent of the code produced. From experience, I can assure you now with metaphysical certainty that not even the people furiously writing that software know whether it will actually work as intended on May 10, much less guarantee it. Simply put, the proposed software-hardware combination has neither been tested completely nor verified to comply with specifications.

The Comelec's full page ads claiming that its system cannot be hacked because prime number encryption algorithms are used, only scares me more. Is the Comelec saying it has no intention of divulging what the software actually contains? Cheating, incompetence or errors could be on the inside without the knowledge of the Comelec or even the vendors, Korea's SK and Accenture Inc. I assert that it is us, the electorate, that must enforce the system's integrity. (Imagine you own a bank. You need software to run it. If you will accept software based on functional demos only, some will do it for free, because they can take all your money at a time of their choosing.)

The suspicion among IT professionals that the administration might cheat cannot be dispelled unless the Comelec undertakes certain global "best practices and procedures" for mission critical software like flight controls, national security fail-safes, banks and telecommunications. Why? Because only a single programmer is needed to insert either bits of stealth *dagdag bawas* code, or to sabotage the entire system so that there would be a failure of elections. Such failure can happen intentionally or because of inevitable flaws in such new and unproven software.

But let me give you an example of intentional mayhem next May. If I am writing the software and know that the "source code" will be kept secret, cheating would be easy. I can combine two pieces of software, one that operates as expected (program A), another that cheats (program B). Then buried in the hundreds of thousands of lines of code, I can put a simple software switch that decides which of the two programs actually runs based on the current date. Three tiny lines of invisible code would do it—(Date=ReadCalendar. If Date=May10 run program B. Else run program A). Now unless the "source code" is submitted to public scrutiny, such "malware" would be grains of salt dissolved in the Pacific Ocean. The program behaves properly before election day, but very differently on it. There are ways to defeat this date-triggered cheat, but I can think of dozens more, just as sneaky if we cannot look at the source code. Only full transparency will deter cheating.

I am not saying such an operation is underway, but all candidates, political parties and the general public should demand that the Comelec adopt a process of testing, acceptance, implementation and verification that is absolutely transparent, independent and credible. Candidates can already review and question the voters' lists. They should have the same oversight rights over the system software functionality, its source code, the process of loading it into the hardware, securing it there and verifying the results with a paper audit trail. Testing must be done not only at the functional level but also at the logical level of the source code itself, which I strongly suggest the Comelec make available in the read only form of a software escrow, open to all competent groups and individuals in the general public and all those talented Pinoy hackers.

My vision is an election system that is at least as secure, robust, reliable and speedy as the automated teller machine system used by banks. The Comelec would be wise to enforce at least the level of transparent software quality assurance used by the global financial community. Certainly our votes are as valuable as our money and deserve equal if not greater protection from digital *dagdag-bawas* and the graffiti starting this essay.

Finally, do not forget the low-tech issue of educating the public. Most voters do not know that writing down the names of candidates is out. They will magnetically ink in little circles, instead. And don't fold or spindle the darn ballot if you want your vote counted. *(Visit my website http://deanjorgebocobo.blogspot.com/)*

Gory movie promo

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

PICTURES are meant to liven up the pages of a newspaper. The more dramatic the shots, the better. The readers are not content with just reading about people, places and events. They want to have a visual idea of the subject of the news.

Unfortunately, not all published photos meet that objective. Instead of attracting readers, sometimes they turn them off.

That was the situation the INQUIRER found itself in for some readers of the Dec. 6 issue of its Saturday Super section. Under the heading "Super! Selections," it featured a short review of the new movie of former American child actor Macaulay Culkin entitled "Party Monster."

To refresh your memory, Culkin became famous as "Kevin McAllister" in the "Home Alone" movies where he portrayed the role of a young boy who was inadvertently left behind by his family in its out-of-town trips. Threatened with physical harm by two bad guys, he used cunning and improvised gadgets to defend himself.

According to the write-up, the movie is about Michael Alig, a gay party organizer from New York who was convicted "for the murder of his friend/roommate/drug dealer Angel Melendez." Accompanying the article was the posed photo of two young girls, wearing what look like trendy designer clothes, lying on a floor. The clothes, to use the words of the younger set, are chic and cool.

One girl was shown with her eyes open and brains exposed. A pool of blood and parts of her brain were on the floor. Near her arm was a hammer with bloodstains that gave the impression that it was used to bash her head in. Beside her was a girl whose mouth was smeared with blood and her left hand held a fork that had a piece of her companion's brains. The bloody nature of the photo was enhanced by its sharp colors.

Traumatized

The picture disturbed a lot of readers. The strongest complaint came from Corazon Sy, a working mother of a 2-year-old girl, who said her daughter was so traumatized by the photo that she cried profusely. The incident was a big damper on the mother's efforts to encourage her daughter to read books, newspapers and magazines. The reader's esteem for the INQUIRER that day sank to its lowest level.

Another reader, Jesus de la Vega, was more polite with his comments, but they were no less critical. He chided the newspaper for "going down to the level of 'shock' radio and TV programs in the United States that throw all rules of morality and decency to the wind to gain high ratings." He expressed serious concern about the adverse effects of photos of that nature on the impressionable minds of our youth.

As a backgrounder, announcers of "shock" radio programs use vulgar, racist and profane language in their commentaries. That broadcasting style, sad to say, has attracted a large audience in the United States. Their counterpart in the boob tube, which goes by the name "reality TV," features unusual activities by some people, such as, eating live snakes or putting their heads between the jaws of a crocodile. The high viewership ratings of these shows indicate that they have successfully reached out to their target market.

When asked to comment on the complaints, the section editor said the photo is part of the promotional materials of the movie subject of the review. He did not say whether he consulted the members of the editorial staff before he decided on its inclusion in the section (which is the norm of conduct in the editorial room for controversial photos) or acted unilaterally.

Unwholesome

For one reason or another, I missed that picture on the day it came out. Thank God, I did. I would have lost my appetite for breakfast if that photo greeted me in the morning.

The photo brings into focus the INQUIRER's editorial policy that the "decision to run photos of dead people should be based on common decency and simple good taste." Thus, it is not considered in good taste to run a photo of a stack of flood victims on a truck, but it is permissible to publish a long shot of a body or two lying in the street.

The difference in treatment may be explained by the fact that a distance shot of corpses does not have the same emotional or psychological impact as a close-up view of bloated or rotting bodies. Most readers do not enjoy graphic illustrations of death or physical suffering.

That the picture complained of was merely staged to promote a movie does not remove it from the coverage of the said editorial policy. It is the effect of the photo on the readers that counts in determining whether or not it should be published.

It's not surprising that the photo shocked the reader's daughter. In her young mind, the bloodstains and splattered brains looked real. She had no way of knowing that what she saw was just a "drawing" or make-believe photo. Some adult readers may dismiss it as a gimmick to promote a movie, but for that 2-year-old it was true to life.

Apologies

I do not buy the argument that the photo should be treated as an art form and therefore entitled to liberal treatment. I am no conservative, but I think there are limits to what forms of art, assuming the photo can be considered as such, can be published in newspapers of general circulation like the INQUIRER. Some pictures that meet the criteria of adult magazines have no place in newspapers that are meant to be read by all members of a family.

Just because a promotional material is acceptable to the American audience does not mean that it is fit for showing in the Philippines. Our cultural norms are not yet ready for that kind of stuff.

Clearly, the photo in question crossed the line on the newspaper's policy on good taste and decency in the publication of pictures.

The INQUIRER begs the indulgence of the readers, in particular, the 2-year-old daughter of the reader, for the unfortunate photo. It regrets whatever discomfort or pain it may have caused them. The appropriate measures have been taken to avoid a repetition of the error.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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We all must do our part

TWO years ago I had the privilege of joining a one-year exchange student program to Japan. It was during my stay there that I realized how much the Philippines has been left behind as a nation. Seeing how Japan was so clean and orderly, how everybody was remarkably disciplined made me so envious of their culture that I even wanted to renounce my nationality. I just couldn't help but compare the people and politics in our two countries. And it became obvious to me why we still remain a Third World nation. Sad but true, I was ashamed to be a Filipino.

I came back with a negative attitude toward our country. After I was greeted by rude airport employees, I took a deep breath of polluted air and swore to myself that after I finish my last semester in college I would immediately leave this country and never look back again.

My views didn't change during the last few months in college. The premier State University I once looked up to was now just a school with rudimentary equipment and poor facilities. The longer I stayed in the country, the more I wanted to leave. But for some reason, as if fate was mocking me, I failed to submit my requirements for the annual board exam. This left me no other option but to work here while waiting for the next board exam.

Just a few weeks ago, I was invited to attend a meeting with friends from college. Little did I know that it would change my outlook in life completely. During the meeting, somebody gave an inspirational talk about being a Filipino and how we should love our country. I was amazed to discover that there are people who, in spite of receiving several offers to work and live abroad, still chose to stay and be useful in the Philippines. Probably the words that influenced me the most during that time were, "I believe God made me a Filipino for a purpose, if He intended me to be an American, then He should have made my parents Americans." Very simple words, yet it shook me. I realized that all the time, I had been looking at things from the wrong angle. Experiencing life in an industrialized world should not make us hate our underdeveloped country; rather it should give us hope that if other countries can do it, then so can we.

If everybody who has the capability to migrate elsewhere would just pack up and leave, then we have nowhere else to go but down. The fate of this country lies in the hands of its people. We should stop blaming all our misfortunes on our government; after all, we were the ones who voted and placed them in position. The blame is ours.

There will never be a super president who will solve all the nation's problems. No matter how intelligent (or popular) he or she may be, as long as the nation is divided and as long as the people will not cooperate for a better society, then all the government programs will just come to naught.

Every Filipino became a Filipino for a purpose. If parents will only raise responsible and law-abiding children, if motorists will only control their temper and practice discipline in the streets, if only policemen would faithfully perform their sworn duties, if businessmen would only be honest in all their transactions, if everyone would just do their part for a better society, no matter how small it may be, then, and only then, will our country be able to take the first step to industrialization.

—**CELO A. LANTICAN,**
6774 Bangkal St., San Antonio,
Los Baños, Laguna

Going overboard in honoring Pacquiao

MANNY Pacquiao, the new Filipino boxing hero, deserves all the accolade and honor bestowed upon him by a grateful nation. He has put the Philippines in the limelight all over the world which our government-hired propagandists have failed to do despite spending millions of public money.

However, for President Macapagal-Arroyo and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, to give him P1 million and a condo worth P650,000, is an overkill. What message are they sending to the poor and the needy, some of whom cannot even eat three square meals a day? The latest survey of the Social Weather Stations noted that 62 percent of the population feel they are poor.

Giving P1 million and a condo to Pacquiao is not the way to honor him. The President could have donated that amount to alleviate the conditions of the poor or build housing units for them. Mayor Atienza could have used that money to build playgrounds for disadvantaged kids. Then they could have named those projects after Pacquiao to honor our new boxing hero.

But it seems to me that our political leaders just don't get it. They can't seem to believe that the country is in dire economic straits. They try to invest in a quid pro quo relation with persons who can enhance their image in the eyes of the public to win votes during the elections. Their actions show great insensitivity to the needs of the poor. Our political leaders talk big about ameliorating the plight of the poor. But it's all talk.

President Macapagal and Mayor Atienza could have set the example by giving the money to projects that could have ameliorated the lives of the less fortunate members of our society. What a shame.

—**NOEL C. PAGSUBERON,**
npagsuberon@yahoo.com

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3 killed in plane crash in Isabela

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
and Christian V. Esguerra

ILAGAN, Isabela—Two Air Force captains and a mechanic were killed on Saturday afternoon when a six-seater commercial airplane crashed off the mountain ranges in the coastal town of Divilacan, Isabela, reports from the provincial civil defense office said.

Jose Armand Araneta, Isabela civil defense officer, identified the fatalities as Capt. Lamberto Melo, pilot; Capt. Melvin Regis, co-pilot; and Mario Valdez, chief mechanic of the plane owned by the Chemtrad Corp. based in Tuguegarao City.

Investigators were still determining the cause of the crash but plane owner Manny Baradas, chair of the board of Chemtrad, said the accident could have been caused by bad weather.

Baradas said it was raining when Melo, Regis, and Valdez took off at the Maconacon town airport around noon or 30 minutes after they arrived there from the Tuguegarao airport.

A report from the National Disaster Coordinating Council said the twin-engine, high-wing plane crashed at least two miles west off Palanan airport.

Maj. Gen. Samuel Bagasin, commander of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, said continuous rains and poor visibility in the crash site had hampered retrieval operations.

Air control tower operators in Cauayan City and Maconacon failed to receive radio signals from Melo a few minutes after takeoff. The plane was supposed to land at the Palanan airstrip after a 45-minute flight from Maconacon, he said.

Residents in Barangay Dimapnat in Divilacan saw the plane crashing in an upland area in the village, Araneta said. The crash site is about 48 km from the Palanan airstrip.

Reports said the plane was scheduled to pick up passengers in Palanan.

Maj. Restituto Padilla, Air Force information officer, said the bodies of Melo, Regis, and Valdez were not immediately recovered due to bad weather that made the crash site even more inaccessible. The regional and provincial disaster coordinating councils later turned over the bodies to the 405th Infantry Battalion.

Prior to the accident, Baradas said his company had been using the passenger plane for 10 years.

"All throughout we never had any problem with the airplane," he told the INQUIRER. "So I suspect that the crash was caused by bad weather, not by engine trouble or pilot error."

Padilla described Islander planes as "dependable though old." He said the Air Force used these general aviation aircrafts from the late 1970s until they were retired in the early 90s. They are now being used by the Philippine Navy.

At least 10 people have been killed in plane crashes in Divilacan since 1980, reports said.

Divilacan can be reached only through a 55-minute light plane trip or through an eight-hour boat trip from Sta. Ana, Cagayan.

Judge restrains Ombudsman from enforcing order on graft

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A judge in Sarangani province restrained the Ombudsman Mindanao from enforcing its order directing provincial officials to answer the graft charges filed against them.

Judge Jaime Infante of the Regional Trial Court in Alabel town issued the Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on Friday.

Infante also directed the Ombudsman for Mindanao to submit its position paper within 10 days and explain why an injunction order should not be issued against it.

The Ombudsman has earlier ordered Gov. Miguel Escobar, Vice Gov. Felipe Constantino and several other officials to submit their counter-affidavits on charges of anomaly in the disbursement of funds to cooperatives and ghost projects.

The charges were filed by the Sarangani People's Action for Reform and Good Governance (Spare Good), chaired by Fr. Fred Maghanoy.

In its complaint, Spare Good claimed that about P51 million in government funds had been illegally disbursed from January to December last year.

Only about P3 million of the total amount had been accounted for.

Instead of complying with the Ombudsman's directive, Escobar and the other accused officials ran to Infante.

Maghanoy decried the issuance of the TRO. He said under the Constitution, the court has no jurisdiction over the Ombudsman.

Maghanoy also cited the June 1999 Supreme Court ruling, which directed lower courts to exercise "utmost caution, prudence and judiciousness in (the) issuance of temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions" in graft cases involving government officials.

The circular cited Section 14 of Republic Act No. 6779, or the Ombudsman Act of 1989, which provided that "no writ of injunction shall be issued by any court to delay investigation being conducted by the Ombudsman . . . unless there is *prima facie* evidence that the subject matter . . . is outside the jurisdiction of the Office of the Ombudsman."

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Resort workers in NBI's bungled job hit slow progress of case

By Jolene Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The resort workers who were victimized by the bungled operation by the agents of the National Bureau of Investigation were crying for justice again as they marked the first year anniversary of the bloody strafing incident.

Sunshine Gregorio, Nenette Castillon, Carlo Cajoles, Donato Enabe and Alfie Fernandez yesterday lighted a candle at the site where they were wounded, to show disgust over the slow progress of the multiple frustrated and attempted murder filed against the agents and confidential agents of NBI-Cebu.

One of the victims, Michael Monsod, who now works for another hotel in Cebu, was in Manila to celebrate his birthday with his family but he made sure his sentiment was known when he sent a text message to Fernandez that he shared their desire to seek justice.

The victims, all employees of the Plantation Bay Resort in Marigondon, Lapu-Lapu City, were on their way home from a Christmas party on Dec. 13 when they were chased and fired upon by NBI agents who mistook them for drug pushers.

Six of the resort workers on board the van were wounded. Only Fernandez was unhurt during the bloody chase from Looc, Mandaue City to Banilad, Cebu City. Police found the vehicle riddled with 73 bullet holes.

NBI agent Angelito Magno and special investigators Arnel Pura, Teodoro Saavedra, Rey Tumalon and Danilo Garay are now facing charges in court along with their former confidential agents.

The Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas also ordered the agents dismissed after finding them administratively liable for grave misconduct.

But Magno and the rest of the NBI investigators have since been reinstated after the Court of Appeals granted their petition for preliminary injunction.

Gregorio, the resort's public relations associate, said they were disappointed because the case has been dragging in court. She said the prosecution has not even presented their first witness after the defense filed several motions that led to the delay of the trial.

"I am a bit disappointed. It has had delays but it's in the Philippines so it cannot be hurried," she lamented.

Gregorio said they remained angry that the NBI agents involved in the bungled operation had not shown 'even a hint" that they were sorry for what happened.

Gregorio said they have recovered from the wounds they sustained but remained traumatized by the incident.

"I still feel unsafe every time I get out from the resort. I still feel fear," Enabe said.

"It won't leave me . . . the trauma and fear are there. I feel I am not safe. To the NBI agents, especially since I've read in the papers that they are back, I hope you would do your job better this time. Don't (make) the same mistake again," Fernandez said.

Cajoles said two slugs and one splinter were not removed from his back. He said he sometimes found it hard to breathe and still experiences pain in his lower back and lower left part of his abdomen.

Emanuel Gonzalez, owner of the resort, urged for a speedy disposition of the case and justice for the victims.

"Certainly it's disappointing that not much has been done. Their lawyers have been working very well in this case," he said.

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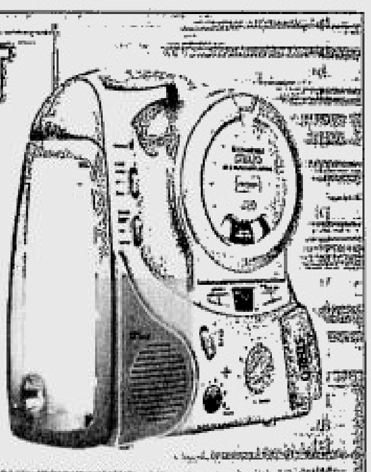

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Leyte town mayor ordered suspended for misconduct

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas (OMB-Visayas) ordered the 90-day suspension of a town mayor in Leyte after he was found guilty of simple misconduct for refusing to renew the business permit of a local ship chandler.

Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas Primo Miro directed William Paler, Department of Interior and Local Government director for Eastern Visayas, to implement the suspension order against Mayor Roberto Fuentes of Isabel town.

Miro upheld the findings of Graft Investigation Officer Gaudencio Melendez that the mayor took the law in his own hands when he refused to renew the business permit of Fe Valenzuela.

Valenzuela, owner of Triple A Chandling and General Maritime Services, is engaged in ship chandling services in the Port of Isabela, Leyte from 1993 to 2001.

She applied for a renewal of her business permit in 2002 but Fuentes denied the application and favored other ship chandlers instead, she said.

Fuentes denied Valenzuela's allegation. He said he refused Valenzuela's application after receiving information that the businesswoman had been involved in banned drugs.

Fuentes had also caused the cancellation of Valenzuela's special permits at the Philippine Ports Authority and Bureau of Customs to engage in ship chandling services.

In a decision, Gaudencio ruled that Fuentes acted with malice in refusing to renew Valenzuela's business permit.

He said the application was ready for the mayor's signature as early as January 2002 while the reports from the confidential agents came in February and March.

Insp. Martin Tamse, Isabel police chief, also issued a certification that the complainant was never involved in illegal activities in their area.

NAUGHTY:
THE OPPRESSED FILIPINO PEOPLE
ANTI-TERRORISM BILL
MILITARIZATION & HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
U.S. WARS OF AGGRESSION
IMPERIALIST GLOBALIZATION
GRAFT & CORRUPTION
GMA RUNNING IN 2004 ELECTION

UNSAINTLY CLAUS

TOOTS SOBERANO

Human rights advocates in Baguio City raise a mock "naughty and nice list" by a Santa Claus that brings not joy but "terror" on people, during the Human Rights Day commemoration last week.

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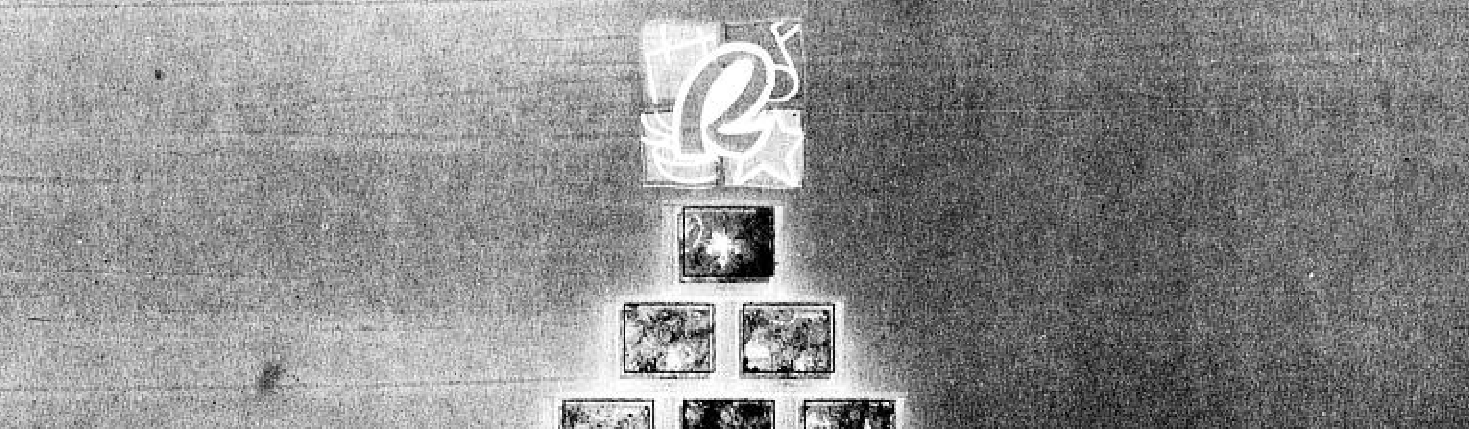

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ROUNDUP

P1M for veggie council

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The provincial board has allocated P1 million for the operation of the Benguet vegetable council that will ensure the sustainability of the local vegetable industry. Board Member Johnny Uy said the council would act as a central body that would address various issues confronting vegetable farmers such as high production cost, price manipulation and importation. *Nathan Alcantara, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Worker electrocuted

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A janitor in a private university here was electrocuted while he and his two companions were reportedly hanging Christmas bulbs on a narra tree. Police said Anthony Doda fell when he accidentally touched a live wire. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Demolition engineer shot

BAGUIO CITY—The chief of the city's demolition team was shot and wounded while she was walking near a parking lot of the University of Baguio (UB) here on Tuesday night. Reports said engineer Nezita Bañez suffered from a bullet wound in the right buttock and was taken to the Saint Louis University Hospital of the Sacred Heart. Police arrested Bañez's attacker, identified as Rudy Kingad, 23, after the incident. Reports said Bañez just came from UB when Kingad attacked her at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday. *Rod Bansag, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Bishop on death penalty

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A bishop here urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to reconsider her decision to lift the moratorium on the death penalty, saying "only God has the right to take away life." "Let them (death convicts) serve their prison terms—be it five years, 10 years or life terms. This would keep them from repeating their crimes, ensure peace and stop kidnapping," said Tuguegarao Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan. Talamayan also said judges must do their share to ensure the speedy and fair administration of justice in the country. "They should render their decisions fast enough but with care and as much time as necessary without delaying and denying justice," he said. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Gordon's 'moving' idea

OLONGAPO CITY—Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon said there is a need to decongest Metro Manila to push the development towards Central and Northern Luzon. Gordon, the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development for Central Luzon, said the government plays a major part in such a decongestion move because it will have to develop the infrastructure to encourage investors to set up shops in Central and Northern Luzon. Once the infrastructure and industries are in place, migration of people to Metro Manila will stop, as jobs will be available in the two regions, he said. *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Village chiefs' incentives

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—Starting this month, barangay captains in Luzon will receive P500 each monthly to help in the upkeep and beautification of national roads. This was announced recently by President Macapagal-Arroyo during the launch here of the "Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin" project of the Department of Public Works and Highways. "The most important aspect of this project is job generation," Ms Macapagal said. Under the project, each kilometer of national road would be cleaned and maintained by barangay officials in the area. The total length of the national roads in Luzon is 15,237 kilometers. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Suspected pusher killed

TANAUAN CITY—A suspected drug pusher was shot and killed by a still unidentified suspect inside his home in Barangay 4 this town on Dec. 12. Victim Noel Olea, 38, who appears No. 1 on the drug watch-list of the town's police, sustained bullet wounds on different parts of his body and died on the spot. Olea was reportedly preparing dinner when he heard someone calling from outside. He left the dinner table to meet the uninvited guest but was shot by the suspect. Police recovered two plastic sachets containing shabu inside the victim's pocket. *Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NPA leader captured

DAVAO CITY—A ranking New People's Army (NPA) leader in Southern Mindanao was captured Tuesday night in a remote village in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur, the military announced Friday. Lt. Col. Hernando Iriberri, commander of the Army's 25th Infantry Battalion based in the province, said soldiers have arrested Felipe Maloon in Sitio Upper Patulangon in Barangay Zone I. He said Maloon, 39, known as Ka Peping of the NPA's Front Committee 51, yielded a homemade .38 caliber revolver with five rounds of live bullets and a fragmentation grenade when arrested. Iriberri said Maloon was responsible for the March 5 attack on a police detachment in Bansalan town that wounded a policeman. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bishop says there's hope in fight against jueteng

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—There's hope in the fight against jueteng after all.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said 178 government and police officials nationwide made it to the "Parangal para sa Marangal" awards given on Dec. 4 by the Krusada ng Bayan Laban sa Jueteng in cooperation with the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

"This is more than double the number of awardees last April, which was only 72. (This) means that more officials are joining the war against jueteng," Cruz said.

Two awardees from Pangasinan, however, said they had never allowed the illegal numbers game in their towns since they became mayors and even before the Krusada was launched last year.

Bani Mayor Gabriel Navarro and Burgos Mayor Domingo Doctor said they oppose jueteng because it corrupts people and destroys families.

"It's so simple. We don't want jueteng. It's the poor people who usually bet even their last money. We don't want it and it can be done," Doctor said.

Both Navarro and Doctor admitted that when they first became mayors, jueteng operators or their men had asked them if they could operate jueteng in their towns.

"I did not give them a chance to explain and told them, '*Gusto ninyong makulong* (you want to be jailed),' and they went away. Then others came saying the same thing. I also refused to take their offers. What was ironic was it was I, the mayor, who pleaded with them not to enter Bani," Navarro, a lawyer, said.

He said he did not know how much money was offered "and I don't want to know because I may be tempted to receive it."

Doctor, also a lawyer and who worked with the Office of the Ombudsman, said he was offered P35,000 monthly, a big amount for a fifth class town like Burgos.

He said he declined "because I may use the money for my personal needs."

"It's not true that once a mayor gets hold of the money, it will be spent entirely on KBL (*kasal, binyag, libing* or marriage, baptism and burial needs of the mayor's constituents). Besides, every mayor has a social welfare fund, which is spent for medicines and other needs of the people. This is what I spend for my needy constituents," Doctor said.

Navarro said the people of Bani "were not trained" to ask local officials for their every need "except when many people suddenly get sick."

"I won't dwell on the reasons given by some mayors why they allow jueteng in their towns. I don't need money to give to my constituents. If I attend a wedding and I have a gift, then it's okay. If I don't have money, I say pointblank that I don't have a gift," he said.

Cruz said a group of barangay chairmen from Mangaldan town was also cited in the "Parangal para sa Marangal."

But a recent survey conducted by the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan showed that jueteng has resurfaced in 16 towns that the archdiocese covers.

"The result is definitely worse than the past surveys and this could perhaps be because of the May 2004 elections when all candidates are gathering campaign funds, legitimately or illegitimately," Cruz said.

23 Laguna cops awarded for foiling robbery gang

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Twenty-three policemen from Laguna received recognition last Wednesday in a ceremony held at this camp for their gallantry in subduing a robbery syndicate in a daring gun battle with the group last month in Sta. Cruz town.

Senior Supt. Napoleon Cachuela, director for administration of the Calabarzon police, said Chief Inspector Jose Marie Paras, Sta. Cruz police chief, and 22 of his men were responsible for the arrest of two members of a band of robbers victimizing small business firms in Laguna and nearby provinces.

They received the Medalya ng Kagitingan (Medal of Bravery). Cachuela said suspects Ronald and Pacifico Rivas, with four others, entered a cell phone store last Nov. 10 and looted it of several cellular phones and accessories and P50,000 cash. Policemen who were asked for help responded immediately. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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December
1-31 Christmas Light-Up 2003 • **1-7** Hari Raya Light-Up 2003 • **5** World Wrestling Entertainment • **7** David Tao Zhe - Soul Power Asia Tour 2003 • **7** Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon 2003 • **12** Singapore Symphony Orchestra - Christmas Carol Concert - Handel's Messiah • **16** Duran Duran 78-03 'LIVE' in Singapore • **19-20** Singapore Symphony Orchestra - Christmas Concert • **25** Christmas • **21-28** Dance India Taste India • **31** Countdown to 2004

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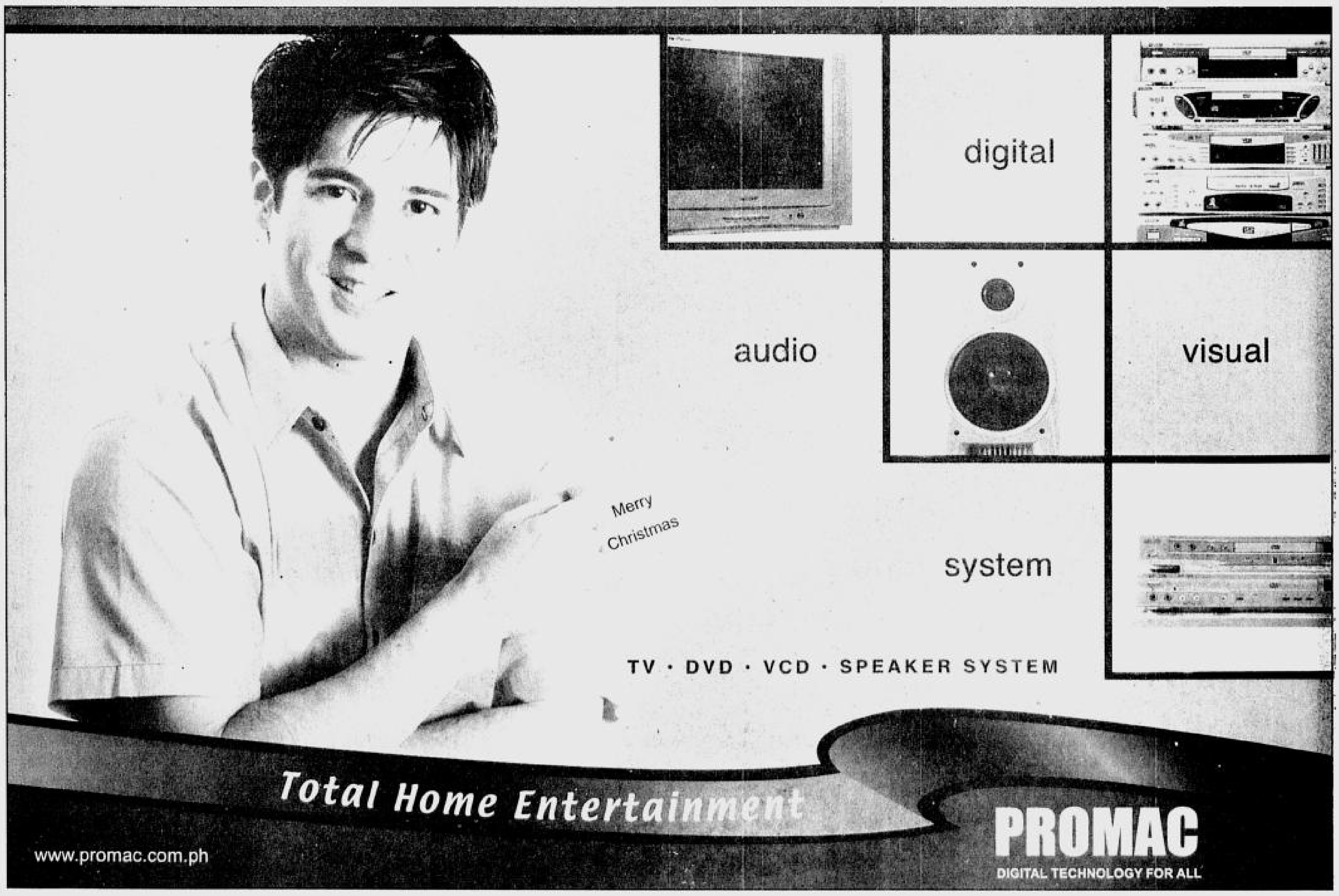


Saddam . . .

From page A1

tion Red Dawn," Sanchez said.

Trapped in the cellar, Saddam was in a six to eight-foot deep "spider hole" that had been camouflaged with bricks and dirt. The soldiers saw the hole, investigated and found him inside, Sanchez said.

The video showed an air vent and fan inside the hole to allow Saddam to remain hidden for an extended period.

Two men "affiliated with Saddam Hussein" were detained with him, and soldiers confiscated two Kalashnikov rifles, a pistol, a taxi and $750,000 in $100 bills, Sanchez said.

"I'm very happy for the Iraqi people. Life is going to be safer now," said 35-year-old Yehya Hassan, a resident of Baghdad. "Now we can start a new beginning."

Earlier in the day, rumors of the capture sent people streaming into the streets of Kirkuk, a northern Iraqi city, firing guns in the air in celebration.

"We are celebrating like it's a wedding," said Kirkuk resident Mustapha Sheriff. "We are finally rid of that criminal."

"This is the joy of a lifetime," said Ali al-Bashiri, another resident. "I am speaking on behalf of all the people that suffered under his rule."

In Tikrit, US soldiers lit up cigars after hearing the news of Saddam's capture.

"The intimidation and fear this man generated for over 30 years are now gone," said Maj. Gen. Raymond Odierno, who commands the division that carried out the raid.

Despite the celebration throughout Baghdad, many residents were skeptical.

"I heard the news, but I'll believe it when I see it," said Mohaned al-Hasaji, 33. "They need to show us that they really have him."

Ayet Bassem, 24, walked out of a shop with her 6-year-old son. "Things will be better for my son," she said. "Everyone says everything will be better when Saddam is caught. My son now has a future."

From hiding, US commanders have said Saddam played some role in the anti-US resistance that has killed hundreds of soldiers and civilians in Iraq. In the latest attack, a suspected suicide bomber detonated explosives in a car outside a police station Sunday morning west of Baghdad, killing at least 18 people and wounding 33 more, the US military said.

After invading Iraq on March 20 and setting up their headquarters in Saddam's sprawling Republican Palace compound in Baghdad, US troops launched a massive manhunt for the fugitive leader, placing a $25-million bounty on his head and sending thousands of soldiers to search for him.

Saddam was one of the most-wanted fugitives in the world, along with Osama bin Laden, the leader of the al-Qaida terrorist network who hasn't been caught despite a manhunt since November 2001, when the Taliban regime was overthrown in Afghanistan. *AP*

Ople dies in Taiwan

From page A1

Asean-Japan Commemorative Summit from Dec. 11 to 12. He was to change planes in Bangkok and fly to Manama, Bahrain, to join Ms Macapagal on her two-day official visit to the Middle East country, which has a large expatriate Filipino community.

Philippine Ambassador to Bahrain Eduardo Maglaya said Ms Macapagal was pushing through with her visit to sign a series of cooperation agreements between Manila and Manama.

The US Embassy also sent its condolences to Ople's family, calling the foreign secretary's death an "immeasurable loss to the nation of a great patriot and statesman."

Congress was to fly the flag at half-staff on Monday and a resolution would be introduced to praise Ople's government achievements, Senate President Franklin Drilon said.

In Bulacan, people brought flowers and candles to Ople's home in Barangay Sta. Monica, Bulacan, when they heard of the foreign secretary's death.

Cups of coffee

Journalists and fellow officials remembered Ople as a man who loved to discuss the intricacies of regional and global diplomacy late into the night over cups of black coffee, amid trails of cigarette smoke.

"I'm exempted from the government's anti-smoking ban," Ople told reporters during his weekly news conference on Nov. 13. "Cigarettes and coffee are the only things that are keeping me alive, and I hope these simple pleasures would not be denied to an old man like me."

Despite a mild stroke in 1994 and a bout of pneumonia and bad cough in recent months, Ople attended international conferences, often in a wheel chair.

Ople was only 40 years old when then President Ferdinand Marcos appointed him labor secretary in September 1967. Ople also headed the Ministry of Labor and Employment during martial law years until the ouster of the dictator in the 1986 "People Power" Revolution.

In 1986, then President Corazon Aquino appointed Ople to the 47-member Constitutional Commission that drafted the new Philippine Constitution.

Ople began serving as an opposition senator in 1992, and became Senate president briefly in mid-1999. He relinquished his Senate post in July last year when Ms Macapagal appointed him foreign secretary, replacing Vice President Teofisto Guingona, with whom the President had a spat over his opposition to the US military presence in the country.

Despite his frail health, Ople handled major foreign policy issues including the Philippines' decision to allow American counterterrorist training forces in the country, a tiff with Malaysia over its crackdown on Filipino illegal migrant workers, and Manila's support of the US-led invasion of Iraq.

Ople led senators in approving a pact with Washington called the Visiting Forces Agreement, which allowed the resumption of large-scale US military exercises and port visits in the Philippines. Left-wing groups denounced him for his pro-American stance.

Ople was also a vocal participant in the traditionally conservative Association of Southeast Asian Nations, backing democratic reforms and the release from house arrest of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi in military-ruled Burma (Myanmar).

Ople was born on Feb. 3, 1927 to working class parents. His father was a craftsman who repaired boats in Hagonoy, a fishing town on the Manila Bay coast. His mother ran the family store.

Ople is married to the former Susana Vasquez. They have seven children. *With reports by Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Bureau; and Inquirer wires.*

SUSANA Ople, the widow of Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, steps out of a ward of Taiwan's Minsheng hospital in the northern Taoyuan county, after a Mass was said for him by a Catholic priest (left). AFP

From colorful journalist . . .

From page A1

alization. He sponsored with then Sen. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo the ratification of the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade at the Uruguay Round that created the World Trade Organization.

Even so, his colleagues in politics and government service had nothing but praise for the man.

"The untimely death of Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, a former senator and former labor secretary, leaves a void in our society which will be very hard to fill," said Vice President Teofisto Guingona whom Ople replaced as foreign secretary last year.

Guingona, who had a falling out with President Macapagal-Arroyo for his opposition to her pro-US policies, said Ople had died "with his boots on and in the service of the nation."

Speaker Jose de Venecia hailed Ople as "one of the great foreign ministers of Asia and one of the four greatest secretaries of the Philippines." He ranked Ople with Apolinario Mabini, Carlos P. Romulo and Raul Manglapus.

"Secretary Ople was creative in policymaking and in the articulation and communication of foreign policy," De Venecia said. "It will take another hundred years before we can have another Blas Ople."

Singapore's Foreign Minister S. Jayakumar said he was saddened by the demise of Ople, whom he described as a good friend.

"He was a senior statesman with a long and distinguished record of service to the Philippines and Asean," Jayakumar said, noting that Ople was due for a visit in Singapore in January. "His passing is a deep loss for his country and the region," he added.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the country has lost a "national treasure ... (whose) impressive record of public service as a journalist, labor leader, labor minister, lawmaker and diplomat could hardly be equaled by any contemporary Filipino."

Necrological service

Drilon said the Senate would pass today a resolution honoring Ople and hold a necrological service for him before Congress takes its Christmas break starting Thursday.

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda said she had learned from Ople "how best to serve the public interest in whatever I do."

"To the end, he was a father to the OFWs whose world-class skills he made known to the world, as he paved the way for their overseas employment as a labor secretary and for whom he crafted many laws as a senator," she said in a statement.

Senate Minority Leader Sen. Vicente Sotto III said Ople had served as his "inspiration and mentor" in his first years as a senator.

"We in the opposition did not begrudge him the right to serve the republic as foreign secretary of the administration for he embodied the dictum that loyalty to party ends where loyalty to country begins," Sotto said in a statement.

Although he served as labor minister during the Marcos regime, he distanced himself from the Marcos loyalists after the dictator's downfall in 1986. During the term of President Corazon Aquino, he served in the Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution, which made it difficult for another president to declare martial law.

In 1998, Ople supported then President Joseph Estrada, who was toppled over allegations of corruption three years later.

Despite his association with Marcos and Estrada, Ople was never linked to a corruption scandal in his public career.

Ople's brief tenure as a senior Cabinet official began in July last year when Ms Macapagal plucked him from the Senate, where he held positions on several committees, overseeing some 110 international and bilateral treaties.

Biggest legacy

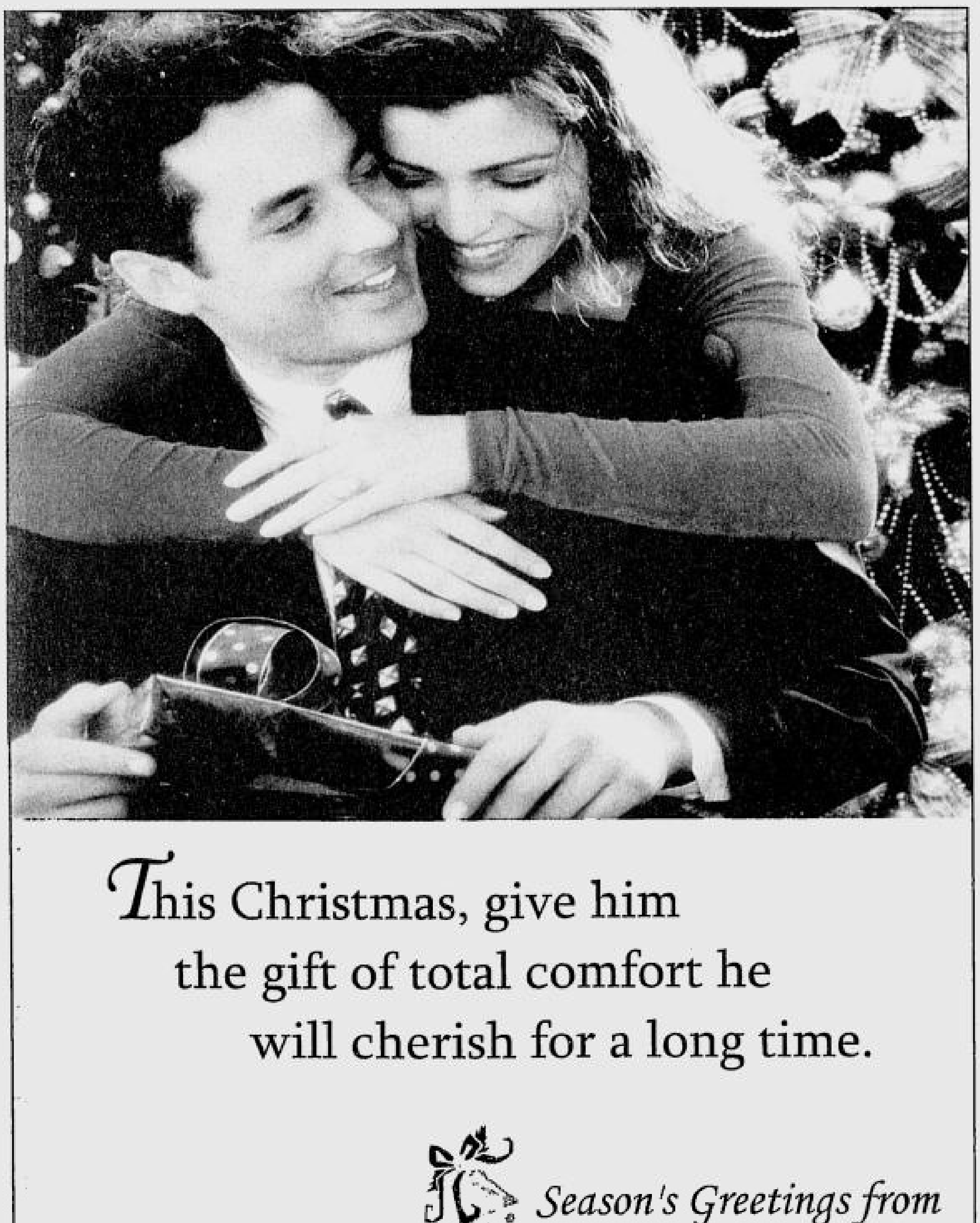
Ople's biggest legacy, however, will be his 1999 sponsorship of a Senate resolution ratifying the Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States that allowed for the resumption of large-scale joint military exercises. The accord was to eventually lead to the deployment of hundreds of US forces to help train Filipino soldiers against the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Western Mindanao as part of an emerging global war on terrorism.

Ople also supported the US-led invasion of Iraq, and campaigned for the deployment of a small Filipino contingent there.

At various times, Ople worked as a newspaperman, public relations practitioner and a university lecturer. At the time of his death, he wrote a newspaper column and was a contributor to academic journals.

"He was a very colorful personality," analyst Teodoro Benigno told Reuters. "When he was a reporter, he would direct traffic in Manila streets."

And his love for a tipple was well known. "When he was a younger man, there were times when he could not go home and would just sleep on a park bench because he had had one too many," Benigno added. *Reports from Jerome Aning, Norman Bordadora, Carlito Pablo, Christine Avendano and* INQUIRER *wires.*



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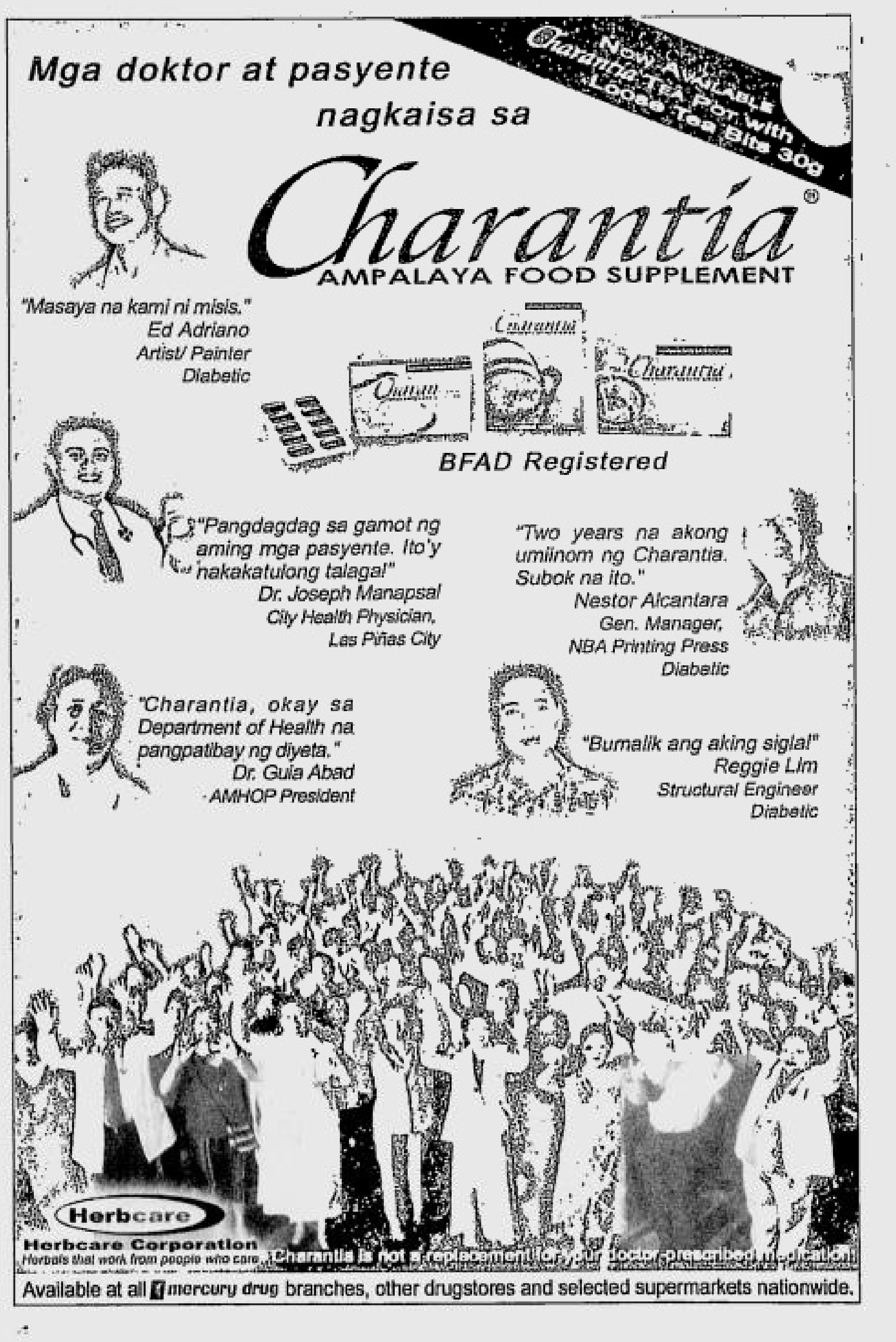

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Gains in log drive cited

By N. Bordadora

THE INCIDENCE of illegal logging in the country could be slashed by half, Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun said over the weekend.

Gozun made the bold prediction after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources reported a decrease in the reported incidence of illegal logging in the first half of the year.

The report showed that 3,720.47 cubic meters (cu. m.) of illegally cut logs had been seized as of June, with an estimated value of around P12.2 million, or only about 29 percent of the 12,957 cu. m. seized in 2002.

"A 50-percent reduction from last year's record is likely to be seen since the second quarter report covers practically the entire dry season, a period when illegal loggers are most active, especially during the summer months from March to June," Gozun said.

She said the DENR was optimistic of achieving its target because of its linkages with the police, military and civic groups.

As of June, Southern Mindanao had the highest record of illegal logging activities with 2,350.94 cu. m. of confiscated logs worth P3.23 million, followed by Northern Luzon (284.7 cu. m., P2.2 million), and Cagayan (224 cu.m., P1.9 million).

Last year, Southern Mindanao topped the department's hot spot list for illegal logging activities with 7,207 cu. m. of seized hot logs valued at P9.9 million, followed by Southern Tagalog (1,500 cu. m., P6.2 million); and Cagayan (742 cu.m., P5.1 million).

Gozun disclosed that a total of 43,894 board feet of suspected illegally cut logs, worth at least P1.3 million, was seized from Nov. 24 to Dec. 3. During the period, the DENR filed four cases against people for violating the Revised Philippine Forestry Code.

Popularity neither policy nor program

From page A1

lems, since he is a high school dropout.

Moody's said that California's credit outlook remained negative, according to FT, based on risks that the state might have to refinance $14 billion of short-term notes and warrants that mature next June. "This is when California will run out of cash if nothing is done," says the report, quoting state officials.

"Given this, we expect the state to remain reliant on significant financial assistance from the capital markets," Moody's said, recalling that the recent moves to raise, not lower, the general fund's cash consumption was "not encouraging."

Ominous sign

Schwarzenegger's Democratic critics said Moody's downgrading "is an ominous sign that California is headed for a financial meltdown unless responsible actions are taken to balance our budget." A state treasurer said, "So far, the governor is going the wrong way. As Moody's indicated, he has deepened our budget deficit. And the governor's current proposals—a massive borrowing plan and a deficit spending cap—merely create the illusion of solution."

From this case study, I am making two points: first, it takes more than box-office popularity in the movies to solve vexing economic problems (most of all, the ballooning Philippine deficits, let alone economic revival); secondly, hiring economic advisers to make up for deficiency in economic knowledge cannot wish away economic woes.

There is a fanciful argument being mooted by those denigrating the importance of learning in the presidency that shortfalls can be supplied by a clutch of academically trained advisers. The argument is hogwash.

Schwarzenegger inherited the state's deficit from the Democratic administration of Gov. Gray Davis. Davis was dismissed from the governorship in November's election called the "recall," a two-stage process unique only in California and another US state, because of the deficit problem. After the dismissal vote, Schwarzenegger was allowed, together with 134 others, to compete for Davis' post.

RP context

In the Philippine context, although the Macapagal administration failed to rein in the fiscal deficit (indeed, it swelled under it), the deficit was incremental. It was inherited from previous administrations plagued by the basic problem, resulting from revenue shortfalls and a political system that has no will to increase taxes.

Camacho and some economists from the University of the Philippines' School of Economics recently pointed out that the country was gripped by a financial crisis which the political system—that cannot summon political will to impose bitter medicine to increase revenue—can't cope with.

Schwarzenegger's deepening deficit deflates the argument that good advisers could compensate for political ignorance. We don't have to look far for lessons. The clutch of political and economic advisers (many of them UP academics recruited by Joseph Estrada) did not make up for his incompetence, which, to a certain extent, was aggravated by abominable corruption. So, advisers are not the answer to deficiency on the part of the executive.

Although the governor had a 10-point plan that he promised to implement by the end of his first 100 days, he paradoxically carried the seeds of escalating the deficit. He promised to repeal the unpopular car tax registration increases. The repeal would cost the state $4 billion and bloat the estimated budget deficit to at least $12 billion.

Arnold's adviser

The governor hired as his top fiscal adviser, John Cogan, the conservative Stanford University economist who drafted President George W. Bush's tax cut proposal during the 2000 presidential campaign. Cogan had said that the tax cuts would not lead to deficits.

In preparing the governor's budget plan, Cogan faced a dilemma. Cogan has pointed out: "The choices are stark. We are either going to solve this budget problem with higher taxes, which would be detrimental to California's future. Or we are going to paper over the problem and engaged in deficit spending that is constitutionally dubious. Or we're going to solve it by reducing spending. If we choose the latter path California will have a much brighter future."

Cogan did not, however, specify where spending can cut. He is put in a bind by the governor's campaign promise to rule out reductions in elementary and secondary education. He acknowledges that deep budget cuts would be "tough medicine."

And, according to some reports, economists also worry that spending cuts would take money out of California's economy just when it is needed to help the state recover from recession.

None of the known presidential contenders, including President Macapagal-Arroyo, has focused on the deficit, a critical issue for the next administration. While Schwarzenegger had a 10-point plan during the campaign so he could be held accountable by the electorate, all the presidential aspirants have fudged the key economic issues.

Poe, among all of them, has only one thing to offer—his alleged high popularity in the opinion polls. He has evaded public appearances and scrutiny of his views and appearances. His handlers have shielded him from exposing his position on key issues.

Popularity is neither policy nor program. Evading identification, for fear of losing popularity, is a travesty of elections as an exercise for the people to make informed choice in a democracy. To offer popularity as a cure to economic and political woes is a quick-fix solution. Worse, it is no less criminal to inflict on the people a fraud—an illusion as a solution.

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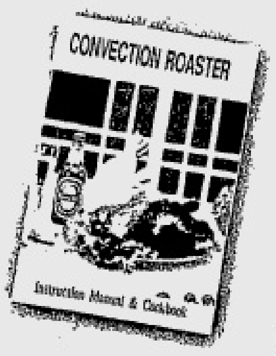

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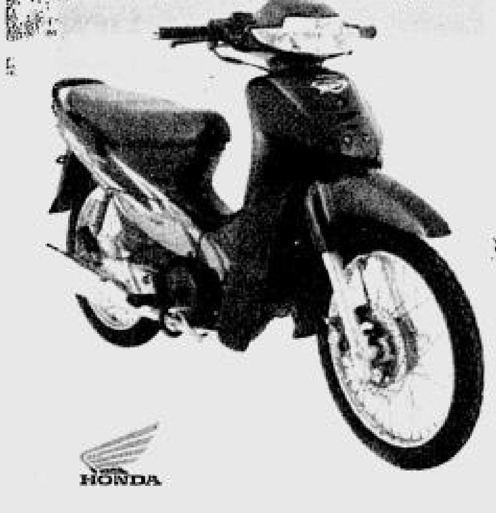
Acting on the complaint of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. of Tokyo, Japan and its wholly-owned local subsidiary, Honda Philippines, Inc., agents of the National Bureau of Investigation-Intellectual Property Rights Division (NBI-IPRD) have been relentlessly pursuing suspected importers or distributors of imitation motorcycles imported from China of Honda's internationally-known models "WAVE 125S" and "WAVE 110S". In a recent series of raids, the NBI-IPRD, armed with search warrants, seized counterfeit motorcycles valued at P6,022,000.00 for violations of Section 168 in relation to Section 170 of Republic Act No. 8293, or the Intellectual Property Code on unfair competition:

▨ Forty-four (44) motorcycles deemed confusingly similar to Honda's "WAVE 125S" and "WAVE 110S" were seized from Mitsukoshi Motors Philippines, Inc. Thirty-six (36) imitation "HONDA" motorcycles were previously confiscated from Jincheng-Mitsukoshi Motors Philippines, Inc. (now Mitsukoshi Motors Philippines, Inc.).

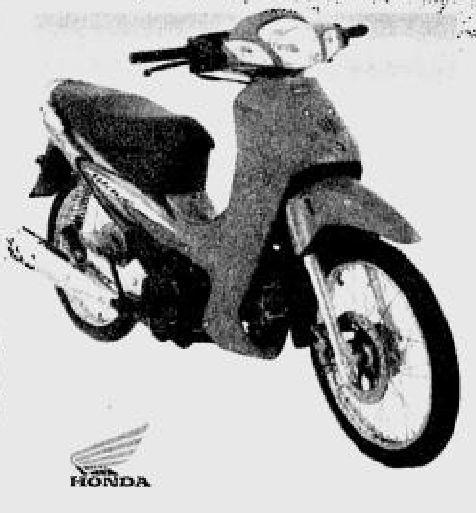
▨ Eighty-three (83) motorcycles were confiscated from Dragon Spirit Motorcycle Center. The seized units bore the marks "DS 110", "DSM-110", "SUPER WAVE", "DS-125", "DSM-125", "WAVER", and "WAVE".

▨ Six (6) imitation motorcycles marked "LIFAN 110" were seized from Rush Hour Motors.

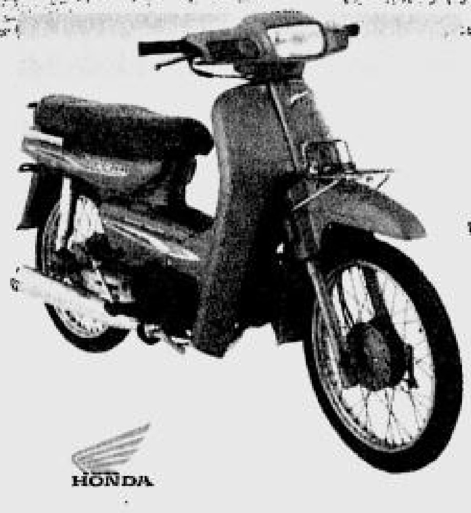
▨ Criminal complaints for unfair competition have been lodged with the Department of Justice against Mitsukoshi's officers Arabelle Lee, Arlene Quieng, et.al., Dragon Spirit's registered proprietors Hon Ne Chan, alias Michael Chan, and Yunji Zeng, and Rush Hour's proprietess, Imelda Gomez Bardon.



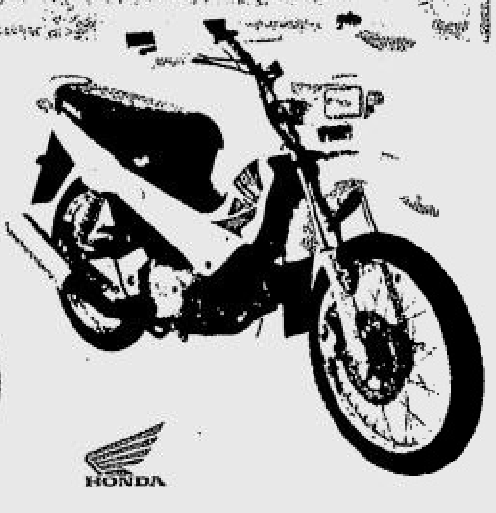
Wave 110 S © (Dual Headlight)



Wave 125 S ©



Dream Exces C100 MS ©



XRM 110 (Pat. Pend.)

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THOSE ENGAGED IN SAID UNLAWFUL ACTS ARE HEREBY ENJOINED TO CEASE AND DESIST FROM DOING SO.

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METROBRIEFS

P20-M drugs seized

AT LEAST 10 kilos of suspected shabu were confiscated from two Chinese nationals during a buy-bust operation in Quezon City the other night. In market prices, the seized drugs could amount to P20 million. The suspected Chinese drug dealers, whose identities were not available as of press time, had been under surveillance following a tip from a police informant. On Saturday, the National Capital Region Police Office Intelligence and Investigation Division conducted a test-buy. A policeman posed as a buyer and met with the suspects in a mall in Tandang Sora, Quezon City about 6 p.m. After seeing the policeman's show money, the suspects brought him to a house in Project 6, team leader P/Insp. Eduardo Morata said. There, the suspects opened a parked Toyota Revo and got a bag of suspected shabu inside. They were nabbed while handing the bag over to the policeman. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Bow wow wow!

NAVOTAS officials wasted no time in implementing the death penalty shortly after the moratorium was lifted. But no, they are not targeting human inmates but stray animals, particularly dogs. Some 200 wandering canines have been kept off the streets and are now on death row, according to Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco. Tiangco said impounded animals will be put to sleep by lethal injection if they remained unclaimed by their owners within three days. The mayor said the drive is being conducted to provide a safe and worry-free environment in the town, especially now when almost everybody is out in the streets for the holidays. *Tina Santos*

Thieves' haunt?

BE CAREFUL when you're walking through the "Historical Walk" on Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan City. Police said the place is slowly gaining the notoriety of being a favorite striking place for thieves in the city. Last Saturday, police arrested Rolly Perales, 24, after he allegedly robbed a medical student there. Sandra Cabarte, a student at the Our Lady of Fatima University in Valenzuela City, was enjoying the sights at the newly inaugurated walk when the suspect snatched her bag containing cash and cell phone. Police recovered the items. Before this, several snatching incidents had been reported in the area. *Tina Santos*

Correction please

IN THE story '8 men bolt QC, Makati jails; 9 officers sacked' which ran in yesterday's Metro section, it was reported that Supt. Benigno Durana replaced Supt. Efren Manuel Sta. Ines as commander of Central Police District Station 9 in Quezon City because of the jail break. We got it wrong. It was Supt. Dante Narag, not Durana, who replaced Sta. Ines. Our apologies.

IN MEMORY
OF DEPARTED
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(1946-90'S)

RETIRED Army Sgt. Wenceslao Rodriguez stands guard during memorial rites held as part of celebration Sunday of the 57th anniversary of the Philippine Veterans Legion. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

They refuse to fade away

By Tarra Quismundo

EVEN with a declining membership, the country's freedom fighters refuse to fade away.

The country's retired soldiers who fought in the nation's battlefields from north to south during the World War II, and a number of those whose call of duty brought them to the wars in Korea during the '50s and Vietnam in the '60s, gathered yesterday to commemorate the day when the Philippine Veterans Legion (PVL) was founded.

Donning vests and hats that bore their names, ranks and medals, some 1,000 war veterans, with the sons, daughters and widows of their fellow retired soldiers from all over the country, marked PVL's 57th foundation anniversary at the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office compound in Ermita, Manila, with the promise that "old soldiers die, but never fade away."

And for those who have already gone, the soldiers once again stood in attention, rendered a salute, and paid their homage while the band played "Taps."

During the memorial rites, the members reaffirmed their vow to continue fighting for benefits of the war veterans.

Established in 1946 shortly after the war ended, the PVL has been working for the pension and government assistance for hospitalization and burial expenses of the country's war veterans.

Membership had reached as high as 40,000 when the organization was formed, but today only about 12,000 members remain.

Despite this, they promise to carry on their fight for retiree's benefits, one fight that would not be won through guns, bullets and a show of might.

Oops, they held up the wrong guy

By Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

THEY should have known he was a policeman.

A suspected robber was killed while his cohort was injured during a shootout in Valenzuela City on Saturday when the cop they allegedly held up fought back.

Suspect Joey Llorando, 30, of Valenzuela, died of several gunshot wounds while Romero Leonardo, 28, was injured and is being treated at the Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital.

Police said the alleged holdup happened about 9 p.m. Saturday. PO2 Efren Oco of the Makati City Police and a friend were then on board a motorcycle when they were blocked by the suspects, who were also riding a motorcycle, on T. Santiago Street.

The suspects drew their guns and announced a holdup. They first grabbed the wristwatch of Oco, who was in civilian clothes. They demanded next the wallets of Oco and his friend.

Oco jumped off the motorcycle and ran. The suspects fired at him but missed. Oco then pulled out his gun and fired back, hitting and killing Llorando.

Leonardo managed to run despite being wounded in the shootout. But Oco gave chase and found the wounded suspect inside a parked tricycle.

Oco also recovered his watch from Leonardo.

Police said several identification cards and receipts belonging mostly to Indian Nationals were seized from the suspects.

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METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Go shop, it's safe, says NCRPO chief

But Chinoys still afraid to tread outside

By Luige del Puerto and Edson Tandoc Jr.

THINKING about what to buy for whom is hard enough without one worrying about getting robbed or encountering terrorists along the way.

So, Director Ricardo de Leon, head of the National Capital Regional Police Office (NCRPO), urged Metro Manilans to leave the security problems to them.

"Go out and shop. Let the policemen handle your security," De Leon said during the launching of the Muslim Concerns Assistance Desk at the Greenhills Shopping Complex in San Juan.

The Muslim concerns desk is intended to prevent rivalries among Muslim traders in Greenhills from becoming as violent as in the past.

In assuring shoppers, De Leon said that the police was on top of the situation, as he also welcomed the deployment of Marines to help the NCRPO secure the streets and commercial centers in the metropolis.

"Allow us and the Marines to take care of you," the NCRPO head said.

De Leon pointed out the timely detection and disposal of a bomb at the Greenhills Shopping Center walkway Friday night.

The way the San Juan Police handled the situation was proof that lawmen could secure the shoppers well, he said.

Some members of the Filipino-Chinese community, however, are yet to be convinced of De Leon's assurances.

"We don't feel safe," said a daughter of Teresita Ang-See, chair of the Citizen's Action Against Crime.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Ang-See's daughter, who requested anonymity for security reasons, said "It's scary to go out. For all you know, you may never come back home alive."

The young lady added that even the sprouting of police checkpoints had not made them feel secure.

"Maybe in a few areas where checkpoints are visible. But generally, the fear remains," she said.

Loot too heavy, 'thief' falls off wall

IT WAS a puzzle which police found easy to piece together.

The body of Jermie John Tolentino, 26, was found lying beside an air compressor just inside the 9-foot wall of a heavy equipment warehouse.

The conclusion?

He fell off the wall while trying to carry off the heavy metal cylinder.

A report by investigator SPO1 Fedencio Basibas of the Central Police District said Tolentino's body, which was lying face down with the head bloodied, was found inside the warehouse compound along Marcos Avenue at about 5:30 a.m.

Responding officer SPO1 Edgardo Buluran of the CPD Talipapa Station told the INQUIRER yesterday that Tolentino was probably a thief.

The warehouse where he was found was a storage facility for used engines and other machines.

According to Buluran, Tolentino apparently took the compressor from the warehouse and had tried to get it over the wall.

But because the compressor was heavy, Tolentino lost his balance and fell off. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

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Tigers triumph

Coke takes PBA Reinforced crown

By June Navarro

COCA-COLA exploited San Miguel Beer's rash of errors and poor freethrow shooting to take the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference crown, 92-84, last night before a sellout crowd at the Araneta Coliseum.

Danny Ildefonso fumbled like a nervous rookie five times in the payoff period, allowing the Tigers to clinch their second championship in four straight Finals appearances.

In all, Ildefonso—the Beermen's hero in Game 6—made eight turnovers as he typified San Miguel's floundering bid late in the do-or-die game.

Tee McClary pounced on those errors, hitting 11 of his game-high 25 points, as he pulled the Tigers beyond recall.

It was Coca-Cola's second straight season-ending Finals victory after win-

TIGERS/ A30

COCA-COLA'S indomitable Tigers, including coach Chot Reyes, celebrate their Reinforced Conference championship, their second straight season-ending crown. RUDY ESPERAS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 7 RP dribblers keen on joining PBA draft /A27

- Love leads by 3 in Challenge /A28

- Spinks stuns Mayorga /A30

- Red Star Rising wins PGC /A32

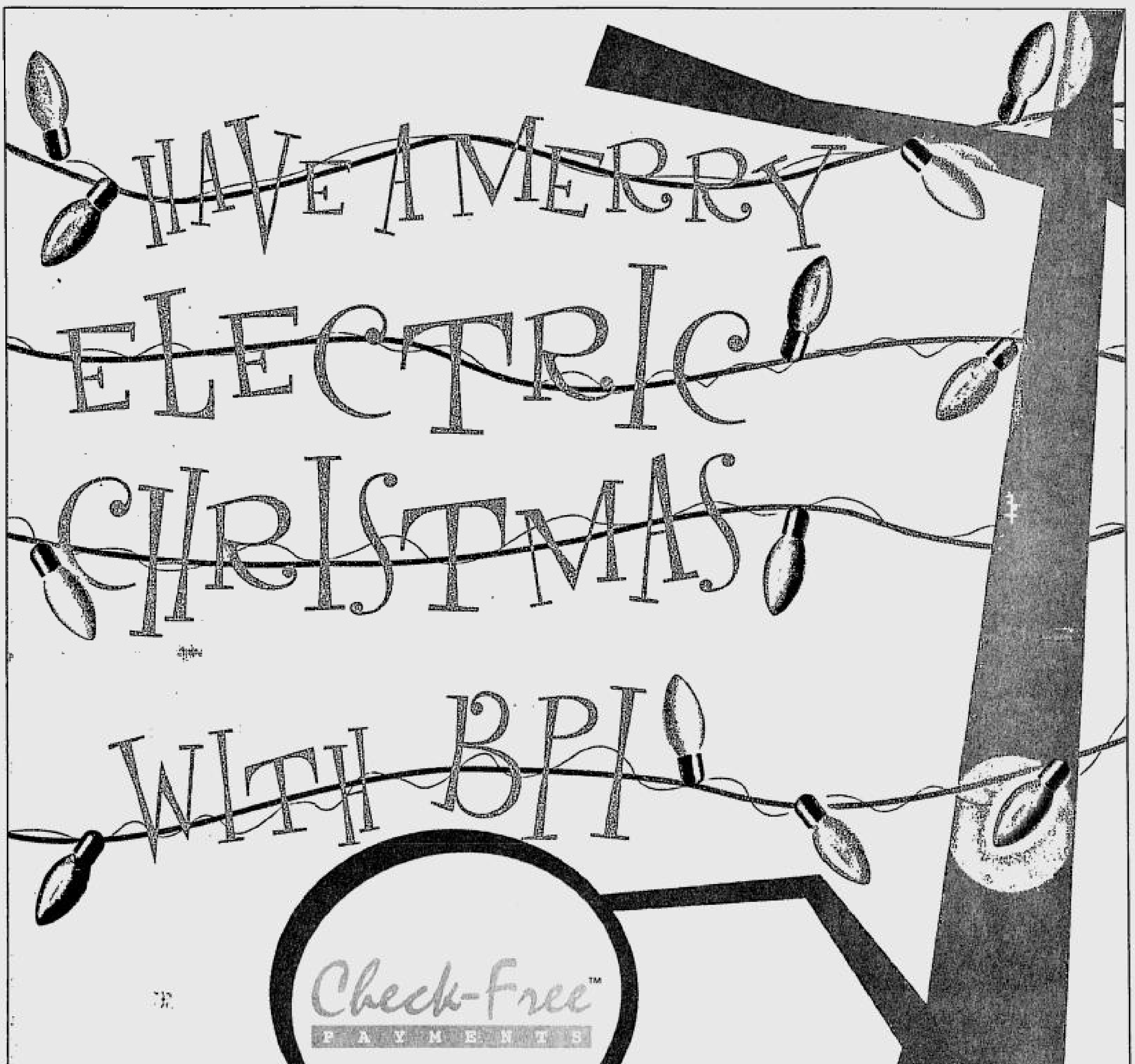
SPORTS TV
Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA-Knicks vs Wizards; 8 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Jazz vs Sixers; 7 p.m.; IBC 13—Atlantic division rivals New York and Washington collide while surprising Utah hopes to score another upset against Philadelphia.

Vintage NBA-Bob McAdoo; 11 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—Take a trip down memory lane and catch a glimpse of the career of one the most underrated forwards in the NBA.

NBA Greatest Games-Pacers vs Bulls, Game 7, 1998 Eastern Finals; 12 noon; Solar Sports—Michael Jordan comes to Chicago's rescue once again.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



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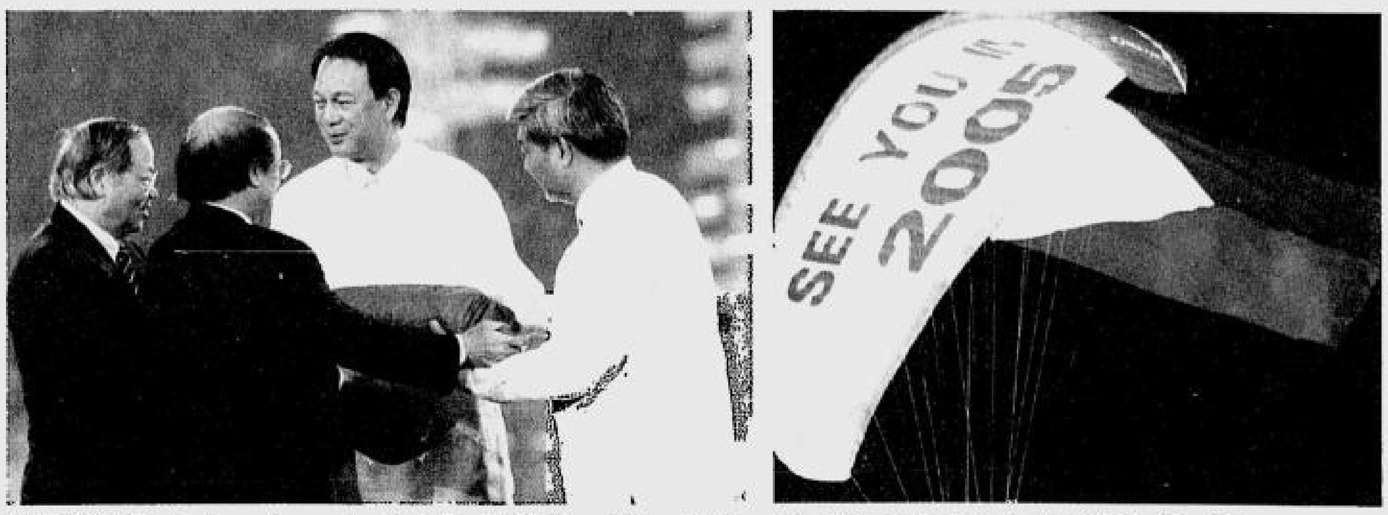
VIETNAMESE soldiers carry the the Southeast Asian Games colors to hand it over to the Philippine delegation. AFP



PHILIPPINE Olympic Commitee president Celso Dayrit (third from left) and chef de mission Julian Camacho receive the SEAG flag from Vietnam organizing committee chair Nguyen Danh Thai (second from left) and vice chair Nguyen Quoc Trieu. The RP flag (far right) is borne by a parachutist. REUTERS

RP bets' SEAG campaign a big success, says Buhain

HANOI—Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) chair Eric Buhain has emphatically declared a success the Philippine campaign in the just-concluded 22nd Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam.

Crediting the achievement to the athletes, Buhain said the 40-plus gold medal harvest of the Philippines was expected.

"It's a success," said Buhain. "We have achieved our goals, two goals to be exact, and all these were made possible because the athletes sacrificed a lot and fought hard and strong for flag and country."

The Philippines wound up with 48 golds, 54 silvers and 75 bronzes to improve from fifth place overall in Kuala Lumpur in 2001 to fourth this year—four golds ahead of defending champion Malaysia.

Vietnam ruled the games with an incredible 158 golds, 97 silvers and 91 bronzes, followed by Thailand with 90-93-98 and Indonesia with 55-68-98.

Buhain also praised the support from Malacañang, saying President Macapagal-Arroyo herself made the athletes achieve their goals in the well-contested games in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh.

"We are grateful for the support of the President and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo. They have been the No.1 morale booster of the team and the Filipino athletes responded well," said Buhain.

Buhain noted that the 40-gold target was expected because of a monitoring scheme employed by a team of former national athletes, led by ex-judo champion Benjamin McMurray.

The team started its task of monitoring the gold potentials in November last year, or just after the Busan Asian Games.

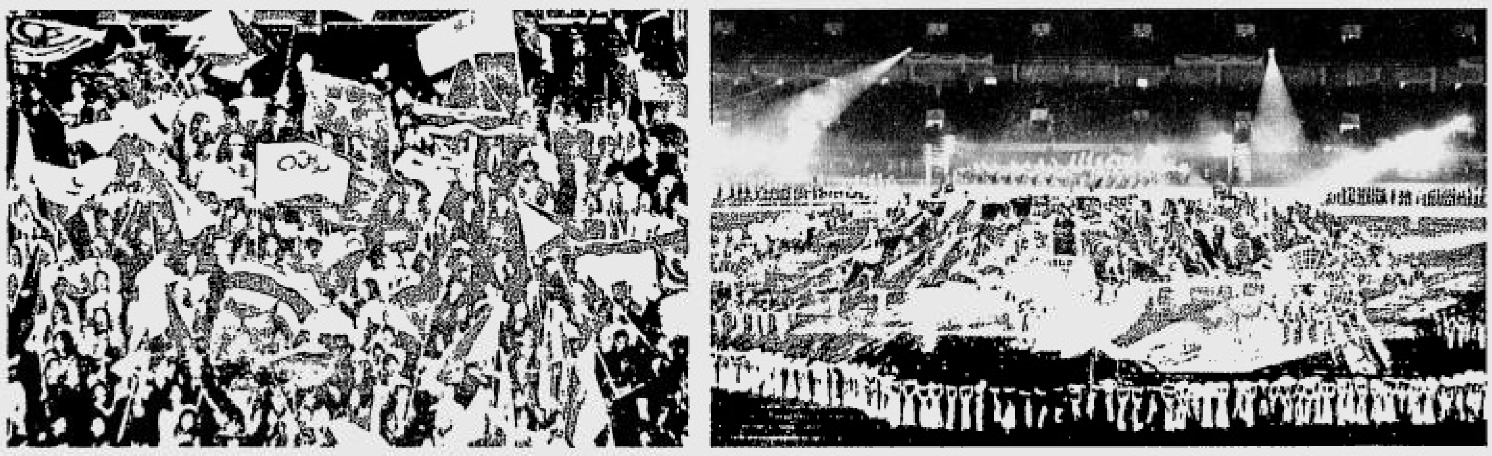
"The prediction was not based on mere hearsay," said Buhain. "It was an effort based on a logical scheme. That is why I bravely predicted we would win more than 40 golds."

Achievers were aplenty in the team, Buhain said, particularly in traditional boat race and cycling which delivered surprise gold medals, and in badminton, where the country grabbed a bronze medal.

Buhain led the last batch of athletes in a chartered Philippine Airlines flight back home last night.

"We are walking on cloud nine. Masayang-masaya kaming lahat para sa mga atleta natin (We are all happy for the athletes)," said Buhain.

The athletes and the officials of the delegations were expected to arrive at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 10 p.m. last night.



FANS wave the flags of the 11 participating nations during the elaborate closing ceremony of the 22nd SEA Games in Hanoi's main stadium, while performers (far right) make their final number. REUTERS

P'tevella praises athletes, Arroyo

BACOLOD City Rep. Monico Puentevella yesterday praised Filipino athletes for placing fourth overall in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam and acknowledged the significant contribution made by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Puentevella, chair of the House committee on sports, said the athletes performed beyond expectations despite problems they encountered during training.

Arroyo, Puentevella noted, almost singlehandedly rallied members of the business community to extend fund support to the athletes.

The allowances of the athletes came late and if not for Arroyo's initiatives through private sponsors, it would have been worse for the athletes, the congressman said.

"It's about time we give credit where credit is due. The First Gentleman extended both moral and financial support to our athletes. Our athletes, for their part, did everything for the love of our country," Puentevella said.

Arroyo initiated a fund-raising drive for the athletes which yielded P22 million in donations by members of the business community. He also went to Vietnam to extend moral support to the athletes.

22nd Southeast Asian Games brought to you by

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Philippines did not have to beg this time

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

HO CHI MINH—This is the old Saigon in South Vietnam, but suddenly it's different country. It's hot, unlike Hanoi.

There's a frantic shriek in the downtown traffic, now bustling with flashy cars, boiling with unsmiling citizens on board commuter motorcycles, many of them riding in tense tandem.

The flight from Hanoi was short, less than two hours, but it was a long global leap from winter to stifling summer.

Gone is the cool Frenchy air, solemnly thick in Hanoi, as this capital where America suffered its biggest modern-day defeat, ironically jumps up in Yankee color and joy.

This could well be Bangkok, although more orderly and minus the steaming humidity.

Still no fester of flies. But beggars, absent in Hanoi, slowly start to materialize on the sidestreets.

The visitor takes off his jacket and, for the first time inside socialist Vietnam, miles and miles away from Ho Chi Minh's revered grave in the northern side, he chances upon a homeless beggar passing the night underneath a cement bench at the park off busy Hue Boulevard.

**

It was, of course, not merely by accident that the Philippines, for the first time in many, many years, did not end up begging for gold in the just concluded Southeast Asian Games.

After a happy harvest of 48 gold medals at the close of competitions Saturday, the Philippines was proudly settled at fourth overall, ahead of Malaysia, the overall leader two years ago.

It must be remembered that the Philippines sank miserably to fifth overall in the 2001 KL Games, when our athletes could salvage only 31 gold medals.

It was clear many RP athletes overdid themselves here, mainly in gymnastics and diving, two disciplines where the country captured its first gold medals in the biennial meet. Wrestling also scored big.

If, say, Filipino competitors did not surpass the original target of 40 golds earlier set by RP officials, RP would have remained stuck at lowly fifth.

**

Efren "Bata" Reyes was a disaster in the 9-ball pool semifinals, the boxers got a raw from the sick judges and had to settle for a lone gold, no thanks to the Amateur International Boxing Association's dirty tricks department.

The tennis association was a big shame as it sank to its worst showing in the biennial Games. Weightlifting and rowing also failed to deliver.

Happily, big winners, mainly from athletics and taekwondo, far outnumbered those who came here and failed.

There, indeed, were many glorious moments for Filipino participants here.

And, unlike in the 2001 KL Games, RP officials did not have to scamper and try secret routes in heading home.

For the first time, the Philippine Sports Commission was also reported set to host a victory party here last night.

**

There, indeed, was reason to celebrate.

For one, we did not lose the basketball gold, although the national team was ragtag, with members given less than a month to work together and jell.

Imagine if the RP national squad had failed to wake up in time and instead got tripped by Indonesia, coached by Bong Ramos, a Filipino?

Filipino misery would've been deep, immeasurable.

Look at host Vietnam, which should also be partying after it catapulted from fourth to the top overall with an amazing hoard of 158 gold medals.

Vietnam's earlier football victories, mainly the ones against Indonesia and Malaysia, became occasions for national celebration, with the streets roaring with uncontrollable merrymaking.

However, after Vietnam lost in its football finals against Thailand, 2-1, Friday night, the national energy here sank like a deflated car tire.

This city was shrouded in gloom. The old carnival madness by scooter-riding, flag-waving fans turned into a slow, solemn funeral procession as forlorn natives headed for home.

Yes, RP went a notch up to fourth overall and also kept the basketball crown, its most treasured gold.

Said Joe Chua Sideno, a dedicated volunteer who quietly helped Go Teng Kok's RP athletics squad: "We're proud of our Filipino athletes; they did it despite the absence or late arrival of equipment from the PSC. But a big task is ahead. Our athletes could get the greatest motivation to perform even better in the 2005 Games if a new main stadium is built in their honor."

As things stand back home, it could appear in the scheduled hosting by the Philippines of the 2005 SEA Games that our country, and not Vietnam, had been recently ravaged by war.

There would also be a problem with all our city beggars and how to hide them.

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GAB suspends erring boxing trainer

By Salven L. Lagumbay

FOR misrepresenting himself to the parents of boxer Freddie Gimay, trainer Oswaldo Zayas was meted a six-month suspension by the Games and Amusements Board (GAB) following an inquiry into the boxer's death last Oct. 27 in Titay, Zamboanga Sibugay.

The GAB, in an investigation led by Commissioner Emmanuel Palabrica, found that Zayas lied to Gimay's parents when he told them that their son would be training for two months in preparation for his fight last Oct. 27 against Robert Gadian. It turned out that Gimay only trained under Zayas for 20 days.

In that tragic fight, Gadian knocked out Gimay in the eighth round. Gimay lapsed into a coma soon after. He was brought to the Sibud Hospital but was declared clinically dead from cerebral hemorrhage the next morning.

"It was ruled that the death was purely accidental, no attendant negligence on the part of ring officials but a clear misrepresentation was established on the part of trainer Zayas," Palabrica told the Inquirer.

But the verdict was met with skepticism by some sectors for what they termed as a "lenient" decision on Zayas, as well as the blatant disregard of the fact that going into the fight, Gimay had been winless in his last 16 fights.

7 RP dribblers keen on joining pro league draft

THE NATIONALS celebrate their gold-medal victory over the Malaysians in Ho Chi Minh.

EPA/WEDA

By Roy Luarca

HO CHI MINH—Seven members of the victorious Philippine men's basketball team in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games here are set to join next year's PBA draft.

Led by prospective top picks Ranidel de Ocampo and James Yap, the Nationals said they want to give the pro ranks a try.

Other sure first-round selections if they, indeed, make themselves available are Ateneo standouts Rich Alvarez and Wesley Gonzales, Marc Pingris, Ervin Sotto and PBL MVP Gary David.

These players, however, are willing to rejoin RP-Cebuana Lhuillier if they don't get acceptable deals.

Jean Henri Lhuillier, team manager of RP-Cebuana Lhuillier, had said that he wanted to keep the nucleus of the team intact for the 2005 SEAG in Manila.

Four Nationals—Recaredo Calimag, Richie Melencio, Dennis Madrid and Celino Cruz—have made themselves available up to 2005, while Allan Salangsang is a free agent.

Lhuillier, who also wants to support the RP women's team, said that he has laid out a long-term program for the Nationals, but it's up to the players to decide whether they would stay amateur or not.

Assistant team manager Danny Francisco, on the other hand, said they are ready if ever the exodus to the pros really happens.

Fact is, coaches Boyzie Zamar and Dong Vergeire are set to scour the provinces for talented tall players who can be developed for international competitions starting early next year.

The Nationals, led by head coach Aric del Rosario, are set to return to Manila tomorrowe (Dec. 16), the last among the Philippine delegation to leave this port city of a million motorcycles.

According to Tony Fabico, Basketball Association of the Philippines treasurer, the team was treated to lunch by the Filipino community here Sunday and are scheduled for a tour of the infamous tunnels during the Vietnam War on Monday.

Meanwhile, the chess team, led by triple gold medalist International Master Mark Paragua, the most bemedalled among the 445 RP athletes who competed in this biennial meet, are scheduled to fly home today.

Paragua, 19, topped individual rapid chess, and was part of the champion teams in both rapid and standard play.

Also with the group are GM Eugene Torre, also the bronze medalist in standard play, GM Joey Antonio, GM Bong Villamayor and IMs Ronald Dableo and Jason Gonzales.

Composing the women's squad which copped the bronze in standard team play are WIM Beverly Mendoza, also the individual rapid bronze medalist, WIM Christine Rose Mariano, Sheerie Joy Lomibao and Kathryn Ann Cruz.

They will be accompanied by lawyer Sammy Estimo, secretary general of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines. Fide honorary president Florencio Campomanes left Saturday.

Filipino athletes here contributed 15 golds, complementing the 33 golds won by their counterparts in Hanoi as the Philippines landed fourth overall behind runaway champion Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia.

The other gold medalists are taekwondo jins Veronica Domingo, Donald David Geisler III, Dax Albert Morfe and Mary Antoinette Rivero; judokas John Baylon, Helen Dawa and Gilbert Ramirez; billiard players Lee Vann Corteza and Warren Kiamco; and boxer Harry Tanamor.

Gaga Gabica too classy for challenger

BACK-TO-BACK Tokyo 9-Ball Open champion Antonio "Gaga" Gabica displayed too much class in the last two racks to turn back Pampanga native Marvin Liang, 5-3, yesterday and stay as the featured cue artist in the "Search for Tanduay the No. 1 Billiards Player" at the Robinsons Malls.

Gabica faces another challenger —his fourth in as many weeks—in this event sponsored by Tanduay the No. 1 Rhum, Robinsons Malls and Rommel's Billiards—the official table.

Until the sixth game, Gabica, with leads of 2-1 and 3-2, did not give Liang a chance to really string it up.

The "Search for Tanduay the No. Billiards Player" is still accepting challengers. Interested parties may call the Corporate Billiards League secretariat at 0918-9219934.

Pacquiao, Mayol rise in ratings

By Salven L. Lagumbay

PEOPLE'S featherweight champ Manny Pacquiao and three leading Cebuano boxers moved up in the latest rankings of the World Boxing Council, in effect making them candidates for world title fights next year.

The WBC formally installed Pacquiao as the mandatory challenger to the winner of a fight between No. 1 Injin Chi of Korea and No. 2 Michael Brodie of Great Britain.

Pacquiao had earlier expressed interest in winning a major title next year, prompting lawyer Rudy Salud to ask the WBC to install Pacquiao as next in line for the Chi-Brodie winner.

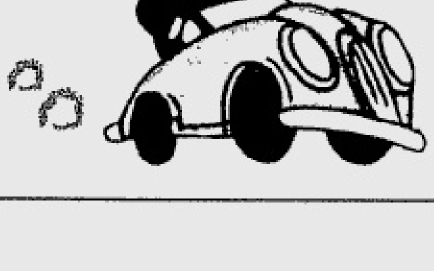
Aside from Pacquiao, No. 2 strawweight Rodel Mayol, No. 3 superfly Malcolm Tuñacao, and No. 8 superbantam Jimrex Jaca also moved up in the rankings released yesterday by the Mexico-based world body.

Mayol improved to No. 2 following his stunning first-round demolition of erstwhile Orient Pacific Boxing Federation (OPBF) champ Genki Ohnaka last Dec. 7 in Tokuyama, Japan.

Ohnaka, who used to occupy the No. 6 spot, moved down to No. 10.

Up next for Mayol is a Jan. 24 non-title bout against WBA No. 12 Juan Landaeta in Venezuela for the chance to challenge WBA champ Noel Arambulet.

Malcolm Tuñacao moved up to No. 3, a notch higher than his ranking last month, after he won the vacant WBC International superfly title from Indon Ringo Jaguar last Sept. 26 in Antipolo City.



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SPORTSWATCH

Jeepney, tricycle challenge finals today

WINNERS of the 10-leg series Jeepney King Challenge and the 10-leg Tricycle King Challenge are vying in the national championships of the 2nd Jeepney King and Tricycle King Challenge starting at 8 a.m. today at Kart Trak, Boomland, CCP Comlex, Pasay. Dubbed as "Hamon ng mga Kampeon" and staged by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., the event offers cash prizes to the first four placers in each category. The preliminary legs were held in Bulacan, Nueva Vizcaya, Aklan, Lipa City, Dumaguete, Cabanatuan, Laoag, Olongapo, Naga City, Mandaue City, Iloilo, Bacolod and Baguio. Pilipinas Shell transport marketing manager Jojo Lopez said that the event aims to educate and remind jeepney and tricycle drivers about safe driving, traffic laws and regulations, and their responsibilities. Pilipinas Shell chairman Ed Chua will grace the event. Movie and television personality Michelle Estevez will perform during the occasion. Sponsors of the "Hamon ng mga Kampeon" challenge events are Shell Rimula and Shell 2T Triple oil in cooperation with the Race Motor Sports Club, Shell Toti Triple Club and Shell Pepeng Pasada Club.

Baler surfers top Mabuhay Cup

SAN JUAN, La Union—Surfers from Baler, Aurora, dominated the 5th Mabuhay Cup-Rimat ti Amianan International Surfing Competition, one of the country's biggest surfing competitions, held here on Dec. 5-7. Romel Rojo expertly rode the waves of San Juan way past sunset to win over 63 others in the 18- to 40-year-old category. Rojo, who won the top prize of P12,000, finished ahead of RJ Hugo, also of Baler, who won P8,000. Tyoshi Takahashi of Japan and Anthony Valdez of La Union placed third and fourth, respectively. The annual contest held at the Sebay and Surf Shop seafronts drew 118 contestants, including 12 foreigners. Joehenry Tena and Smith de la Torre also made it one-two for Baler in the under-18 category. La Union's Marie Aquino ruled the women's category, followed by Siargao's Manet Alcala, La Union's Daisy Valdez and Baler's Evangeline Mendoza.

Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Golez, Abaya cheer rival football teams

PHILADELPHIA—National Security Adviser Rollo Golez led a contingent of Filipino graduates of the prestigious US Naval Academy in Annapolis in cheering for the Navy Midshipmen when the latter beat the Army Black Knights from West Point, 34-6, to bag the coveted Commander-in-Chief's Trophy at the Lincoln Financial Field here. Golez (USNA Class 1970), who held the middleweight boxing title during his college days at the Naval Academy, watched from the sidelines with retired Commodore Chuck Agustin (USNA Class 1960) while Armed Forces Chief of Staff Narciso Abaya (West Point Class 1971) and Joey Syjuco (West Point Class 1969) were also present cheering for the West Point Black Knights.

Konka five raps UCM, leads semis cast

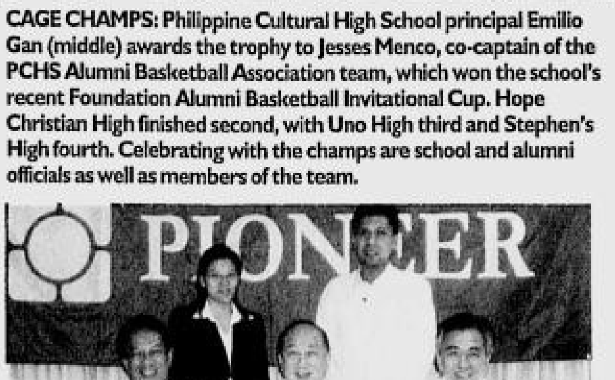
DEFENDING champion Konka Plastics handed UCM Cooling Coils its first loss, 65-58, to take top seeding going into the crossover semifinals of the GCHS Inter-Batch basketball tournament at the GCHS gym. Coming off a 61-73 defeat to Congo Grille, Konka posted a 37-30 lead at the turn and banked on timely outside bombs by Francis Tiu to thwart the Cooling Coils' repeated rallies. Tiu led Konka's offensive with 23 points while Lin Yih Liang and Alvin Lim chipped in 17 and 12, respectively. Jeff Ang was the lone UCM player in double figures with 11. Konka meets fourth seeded Anson's in the semifinals today with the winner facing either UCM or YKL for the championship. Anson's made it to the next round by routing Karat, 80-57. Anson's and Congo Grille finished with similar 6-3 cards but the latter advanced by virtue of the winner-over-the-other rule. Anson's beat Congo Grille, 70-64, in their only meeting in the tournament sponsored by Red Bull Barako, Uratex, UCM Cooling Coil and One Spa and Fitness Center.

Fifty fights usher in NCA 7-cock derby

SOME 50 exciting fights are on tap when the second leg of the National Cockers Association 7-Cock Derby gets under way at 5 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum. The 3-cock elimination round starts off the competition, with the championship round slated this Wednesday. Co-hosts of the derby are partners Ruel Ricafort of Parañaque, JV Magsaysay, Tos Reyes of Loma Cockpit, Edgar Santos and Mayor Nic Patenia of Pililla, Rizal. The derby's third leg is scheduled on Jan. 12 and 14 and will be hosted by Pico Berin and Rep. Rudy Albano. Meanwhile, international cockfighting returns to the Big Dome on Jan. 19, 21 and 23 with the staging of World Slasher Cup 2004 8-Cock International Derby. The powerhouse team composed of Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Firefly Group, Gov. Ito Yñares, Rene Medina of California and P. Berin are hosts of the slambang affair. For inquiries, call 911-3101 and 911-2928.

TEAM THEM YOUNG: Coca-Cola Tigers assistant coach Biboy Ravanes (left) and player Cris Bolado teach young participants defense techniques during the recent Coca-Cola Basketball Clinic at the Lyceum Northwestern University gym in Dagupan City. The kids were treated to Coke coach Chot Reyes' unique style of instruction.

CAGE CHAMPS: Philippine Cultural High School principal Emilio Gan (middle) awards the trophy to Jesses Menco, co-captain of the PCHS Alumni Basketball Association team, which won the school's recent Foundation Alumni Basketball Invitational Cup. Hope Christian High finished second, with Uno High third and Stephen's High fourth. Celebrating with the champs are school and alumni officials as well as members of the team.



PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit (seated left), Pioneer Insurance SVP Ernesto Chan (middle) and POC first VP Steve Hontiveros sign the agreement appointing Pioneer Insurance as the official insurer of members of the national delegation who saw action in the recent Vietnam Southeast Asian Games. The year-round personal accident coverage for athletes and officials is part of the company's commitment to Philippine sports. Standing from left are Pioneer VP Jenny Tolentino and SVP Raul Talatala.

Ozamiz cagers barge into Final 4

CEBU CITY—Compak-Shineway-Ozamiz City waxed hot in the third period to repulse Grachiya-Adamson, 82-64, yesterday and clinch the last semifinal seat of the 2003 Panasonic-National Basketball League (NBL) Regional Cup at the New Cebu City Coliseum here.

Boyet Guerrero drilled in nine of his 16 points in the third period and conspired with Edgar Echavez and Arnold Booker in a third-quarter breakaway to put Ozamiz in the Final Four.

M. Lhuillier-Kwarta Padala-Cebu, Ilocos Sur Snipers and Spring Cooking Oil-San Pablo-7 Lakers were the first three squads to reach the semis of the tournament sponsored by Panasonic Phils., Beer na Beer, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, BJ Star Logistics and Molten Basketball.

Compak-Shineway-Ozamiz will face the Ilocos Sur Snipers in the knockout match for the first finals slot at 4 p.m.

The other championship berth will be disputed by Spring Cooking Oil-San Pablo at 6 p.m.

"We might have played badly today, but what's important is we now have a shot at the championship," said Compak-Ozamiz City coach Francis Rodriguez.

Grachiya-Adamson controlled the game in the early going as Patrick Cabahug hit 10 of his 13 points in the first quarter to put his team ahead, 26-15.

An early Compak offensive in the third quarter silenced the Grachiya Falcons and the Adamson crew couldn't get closer than 13 points, 56-69, from there.

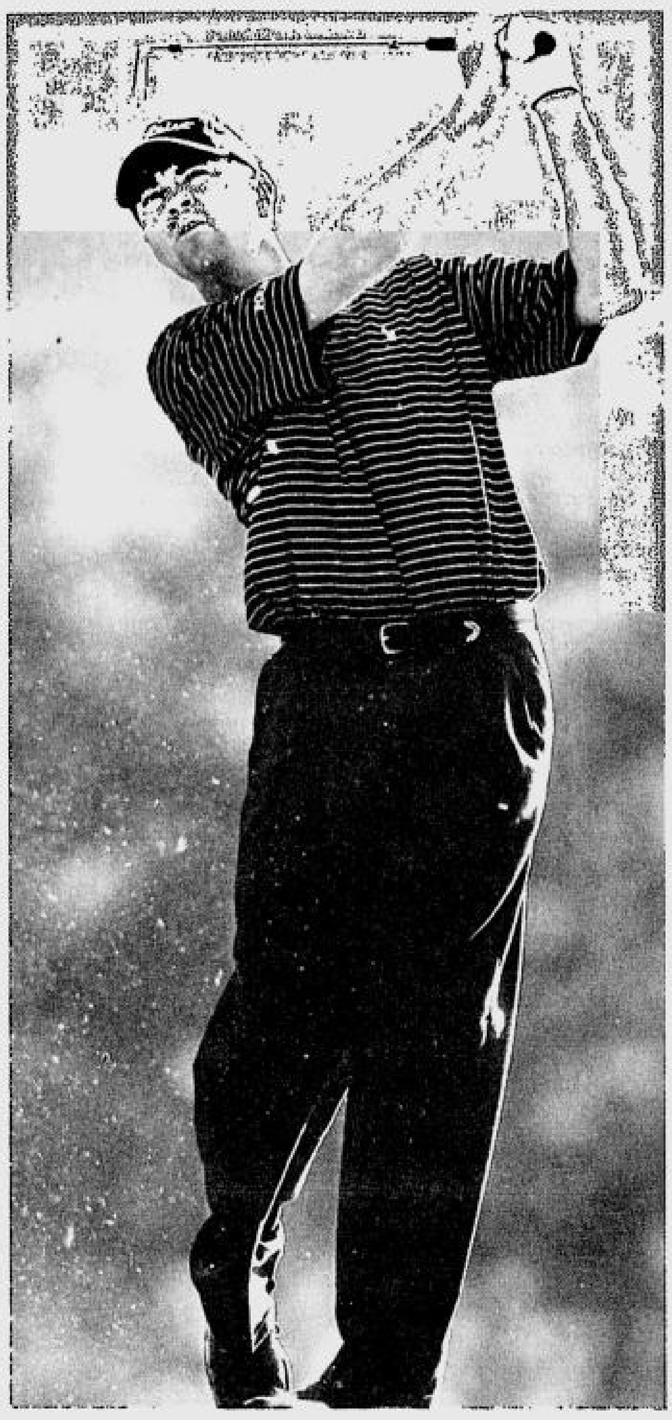
Scores:

COMPAK-OZAMIZ 82—Guerrero 16, Booker 12, Echavez 11, Cabigkis 10, Flores 8, Rodriguez 8, Sampelo 8, Guiyab 5, Ferraren 2, De Jesus 2, Almonario 0, Libatog 0, Delina 0

GRACHIYA-ADAMSON 64—Bono 18, Cabahug 13, Abadia 9, Hate 7, Tagupa 5, Hugnatan 4, Alonzo 4, Poloyapoy 2, Tajonera 2, Tiongco 0, Gandarosa 0

Quarters: 15-22, 33-35, 61-48, 82-61

Love builds 3-shot lead in Challenge



LOVE makes his approach shot on the 18th fairway. AP

THOUSAND OAKS, California—Walking from the practice range before the third round, a fan called out to Tiger Woods, "Go win today, Tiger!"

Woods smiled and said to himself, "How can you win a tournament on Saturday?"

Davis Love III might have shown him how.

With a birdie chance on nearly every hole, Love pulled away from Woods and just about everyone else at the Target World Challenge by matching the tournament record of 9-under 63 to build a three-shot lead.

"It didn't seem easy, but I hit a lot of good shots and a lot of good putts," said Love, who was at 11-under 205 and in great shape to become the first repeat winner of the event.

It was going so good that when he and Woods reached the 10th tee, Woods mentioned that he was 2-up on Love.

"He said, 'How's that?' I told him I was getting a stroke a hole," Woods said, who had dropped seven shots to Love on the front nine.

It was going so good that when Love stood over a 15-foot birdie putt on the 17th, all he thought about was making his 11th birdie of the day. Instead, his ball caught the lip and went 8 feet by, and he missed that one for his only bogey.

"Other than that, I felt like I could birdie every hole," Love said. "And I almost did."

Love's 63 tied the tournament record set last year by Padraig Harrington, which also came in the third round and gave the Irishman a six-shot lead. He wound up holding off a late charge by Woods to win by two.

Love only had a three-shot margin over K.J. Choi (65), although he won't have to worry about Woods.

As most of the leaders were posting birdies on a sunny, benign afternoon at Sherwood, the tournament host gave up ground with a three-putt bogey on No. 3 and then hit his tee shot into the water for a bogey on the next hole.

Woods lost all hope on the final hole, hitting off the pine straw and coming up well short, into the water, and he had to make a 15-footer for bogey. He had a 72 and was nine shots back at 214.

"I'm working on a few things in my swing," Woods said. "When I do it right, I hit some unbelievably good golf shots. When I don't, it's 'Fore Left!' and 'Fore Right!'"

Meanwhile, Love played some of his best golf since early in the year.

"I was confident all day," Love said. "I'm getting more and more comfortable playing with Tiger and around the lead." *AP*

US, 10 other countries vying in jungolf tilt

ELEVEN countries, including the United States and host Philippines, are competing in the Samsung Philippine International Junior Golf Championship set Jan. 5-9 at the east course of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

The Philippines will be represented by top players from Metro Manila and the provinces in the annual championships launched seven years ago to provide a major junior golf event in the region.

Edgardo Cantada, president of the organizing Philippine Junior Golf Federation, said they have lined up activities to make the players' stay in the country both competitive and festive.

The US, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia are all expected to field players in the different age groups.

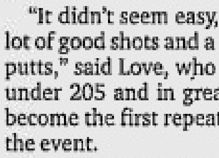
Entry fees have been waived, even though the event is one of the most prestigious in the region.

Cantada thanked Wack Wack Golf and Country Club for its support. The tournament also marks the second time that Samsung is the title sponsor.

Junior golfers who wish to join the championships may call Gerard Cantada at 0917-8332352.

Chowdry controls amateur boxing

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Iñigo

BOXING used to be a sport I loved. Now, I feel utterly betrayed. The way those judges showed their bias in favor of the Thais against the Filipinos in the just-ended 22nd Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam was a blatant example of incompetent officiating, a rip-off in the eyes of many, including enraged Vietnamese fans who rioted in protest over the series of faulty officiating.

It was bizarre. How on earth could five Filipino fighters lose to their Thai opponents in the finals while only one Filipino—lightflyweight Harry Tañamor—won the gold medal and only because he did not have a Thai for an opponent but an Indon boxer? Ringsiders also said at least three Filipino finalists—lightweight Florencio Ferrer, pinweight Juanito Magliquian and featherweight Roel Laguna—could have been the winners but the judges called it otherwise. What on earth is wrong with your judges, Prof. Anwar Chowdry?

This persistent problem of unfair officiating has remained unabated through the years. What happened in Vietnam was only history repeating itself: a clear case of past and present danger to amateur boxing, leading the aficionados to ask, has Chowdry outlived his usefulness?

Chowdry of Pakistan was elected president of the powerful World Amateur Boxing Federation, also popularly known by its French acronym Aiba, in 1964 after the Tokyo Olympic Games. He has remained at the helm since then to the chagrin of the silent majority in the association, but he was able to keep the presidency because of his gift of gab. Acknowledged as the godfather of amateur boxing, Chowdry virtually controls the more than 188-member nations of Aiba.

He designed the controversial computerized scoring machine in the World Championships in Moscow in 1980 to minimize bum decisions in the sport. But instead of helping eradicate faulty officiating, the machine has only stirred worldwide controversy. Some years back, American boxing judge Bill Waeckeerle, a 15-year veteran of international boxing, resigned in disgust, saying, "Frankly, Mr. President (Anwar Chowdry), the (present computer scoring) system does not work."

On the other hand, Philippine amateur boxing chief Manny Lopez said he was not about to throw in the towel just because of the debacle in Vietnam. It's time to bounce back from these setbacks, he added.

"The Olympics next year will be our next target," said Lopez, who is also secretary general of the Federation of Asian Amateur Boxing. "We are hosting the 2004 Asian Boxing Championships in Palawan in January and we are ready for that. This ABC will serve as the first of three Asian region qualifying tournaments for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens."

Manny Lopez is dead serious in winning the country's first ever Olympic gold medal by continuing a massive grassroots development program together with his father Mel, a former Philippine Sports Commission chair and Manila mayor.

The elder Lopez, also a former boxing association president, said: "We have a lot of young talents waiting to be tapped and harnessed, that's why we are conducting boxing lessons nationwide in our quest for Olympic gold." In the last "Boxing Development Clinic" held in Tondo, more than 2,000 boys and girls participated.

Although not much has gone right for us over the past years, still it is only in boxing where the Filipino athletes have won many medals in the most recent Olympic Games. In Tokyo in 1964, Anthony Villanueva won the silver medal; in 1988 Leopoldo Serantes won the bronze in Seoul; in 1992 Roel Velasco won another bronze in Barcelona, while Roel's younger brother, Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco Jr., won the silver in Atlanta in 1996.

Because of this, boxing diehards say, "Don't let up now."

***

REVELATION. Diving emerged as the biggest revelation in the 22nd SEA Games in Vietnam, proving that this is one sport where the Philippines can excel in international competitions where height is not might. The two gold medals won by unassuming Rexel Ryan Fabriga attested that diving is truly meant for the Filipino athletes, a sporting discipline which, businessman-sportsman Putch Puyat said (weeks before the RP team left for Vietnam), is the sport to watch in the SEA Games. Needless to say, Puyat was right . . . I salute Red Dumuk for being a man of honor. Unlike some NSA presidents who cling to their positions like leeches, Dumuk resigned as president of the Wrestling Association of the Philippines when his wards failed to win five gold medals in the 22nd SEA Games as he had predicted. Wrestling only won four golds. How many Red Dumuks do we have in Philippine sports?

RP karters seek Asian jr. crown

NATIONAL Open champion Michelle Bumgarner and Asian champion Matteo Guidecelli led a lean but compact Philippine team that left for Malaysia recently to see action in the final leg of the 2003 Asian Karting Open Championships in Langkawi.

Both Bumgarner of M&M Racing and Guidecelli of Team Cebu-CRG are in strong contention for the Junior International Continental-A crown, where they expect to face tough Indonesian karter Ryan Anthony Monoaya.

BUMGARNER: Division leader

The 15-year-old Bumgarner bagged the overall Open class crown in the recent national championships and currently leads her division in the Asian Karting Open.

Guidecelli is looking forward to his second crown after clinching the Asian title in the Manila leg of the three-stop series last October.

Joining the delegation are Edgesports' Christian Barrero, who finished third behind Guidecelli and Bumgarner in the Manila leg of the Asian championships at the Carmona Circuit Phils. last October, Lee Bumgarner of M&M Racing and JP Cariño of Intelco.

Barrero, Lee Bumgarner and Cariño are vying in the Formula Rotax Max Masters.

Mark Bumgarner and Marty Aguilar are seeing action in the Formula Rotax Max Juniors while Paco Rodriguez of Team Cebu-CRG is the lone Philippine bet in the Cadet 85 class.

With their powerful engines and excellent techniques, the Indonesians are heavily favored to dominate the races.

But Bumgarner and Guidecelli are unimpressed.

"The Indonesians may have the talent and more powerful engines but we have shown them that they could be beaten," said Guidecelli.

"I think we're on even ground. The Langkawi track is challenging and fast, much like the Carmona Circuit, But I believe that gives us an advantage over the Indonesians," said Bumgarner.

Some 60 karters from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, India and Hong Kong are participating in the championships.

Finex Masters Cup tomorrow at WW

EXCITING prizes are up for grabs in the 3rd Finex Masters Cup Golf Tournament slated tomorrow at the Wack Wack west course.

Tee-off is from 8 to 10 a.m.

The low net and the top two places in three handicap divisions (Class A for 0-17 handicap, Class B for 18-26 and Class C for 27 and above) under the Modified System 36 mode of scoring will be disputed.

Carriedo Mall is the major sponsor of the year-ending event of the Finex golf activities. Hole sponsors are Phil. Rural Banking Corp., Nike, Standard Chartered, United Laboratories, Cathay Steel, L.G. Atkimson, Eric Liang, PDG Melito "Bimbo" Salazar and Citibank N.A.

Intel Telecom Systems is providing a Yamaha Golf Cart as a hole-in-one prize.

Heading the organizing committee is Cecilio Paul San Pedro with Salazar as golf subcommittee chair and Ramon Opulencia as liaison director. The other members are Armando Samia, Arsenio Locsin, Franc Isaac, Federico Ortiz, Gaudencio Hernandez Sr., Jaime Panganiban, Jose Vicente Alde and Narciso Erana.

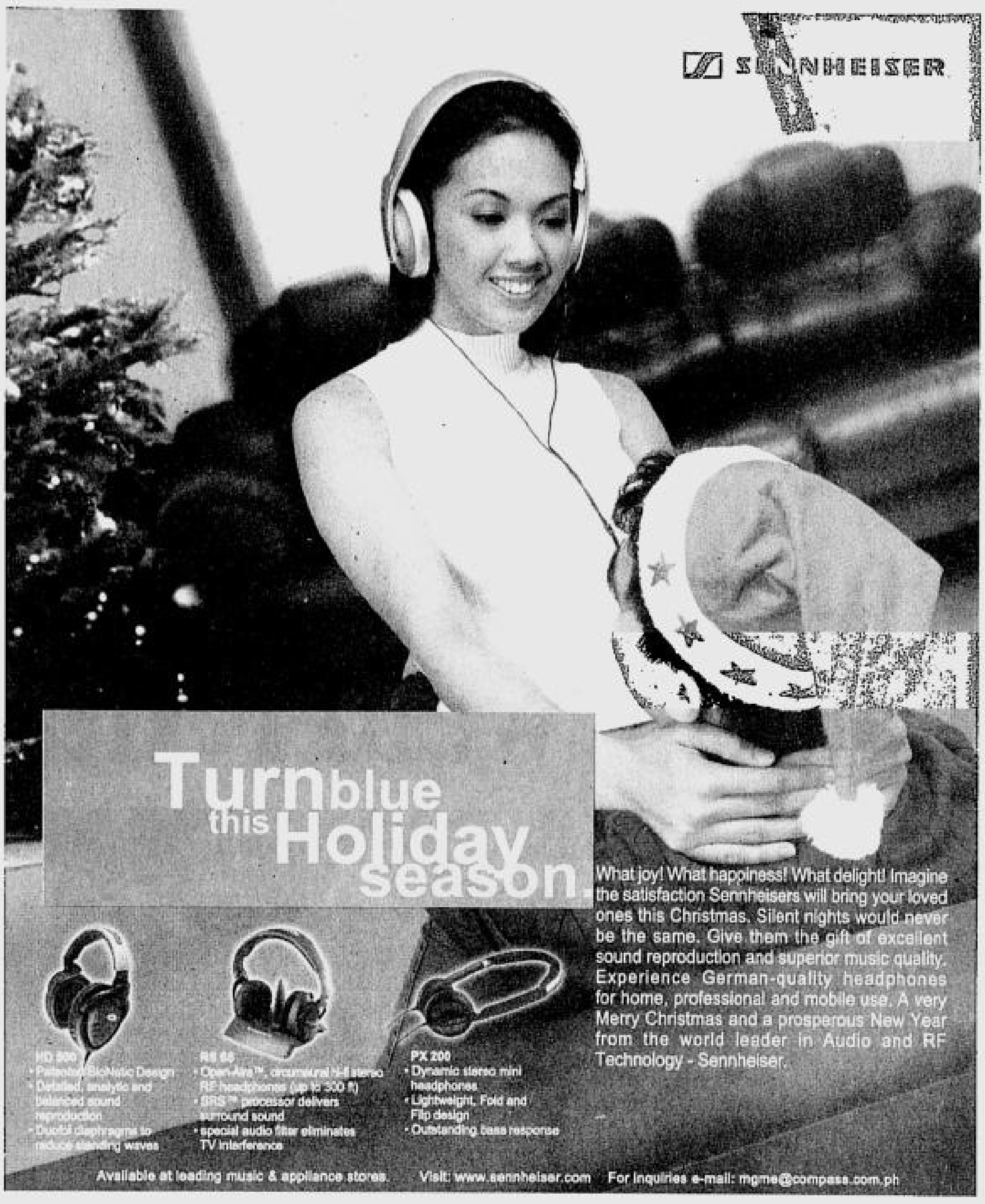
Filipina-American cops Aspac lawn bowls title

CARMEN Pabroa-Anderson of the Philippines qualified to next year's world championships by winning the singles title in the recent Asia Pacific Lawn Bowls Championships in Brisbane, Australia.

The Philippine team, made up of five men and as many women, also bagged a bronze in the ladies' triples in the 16-nation championships.

Pabroa-Anderson, who learned to play lawn bowls in Norfolk Island, beat the tournament favorite from Australia in the quarterfinals and an entry from New Zealand in the finals. It was former world champion Pabroa-Anderson's fourth Asia Pacific singles title.

A team made up of Maila Guyal Witheridge, Lolita Manzanares Treasure and Sonia Yangyang Bruce placed third in the triple event.



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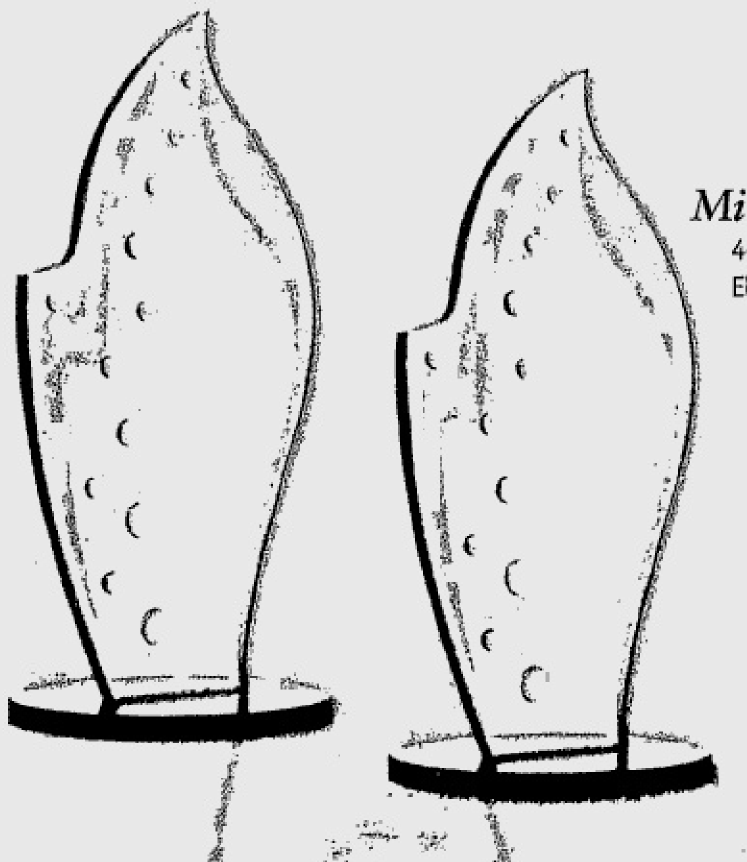

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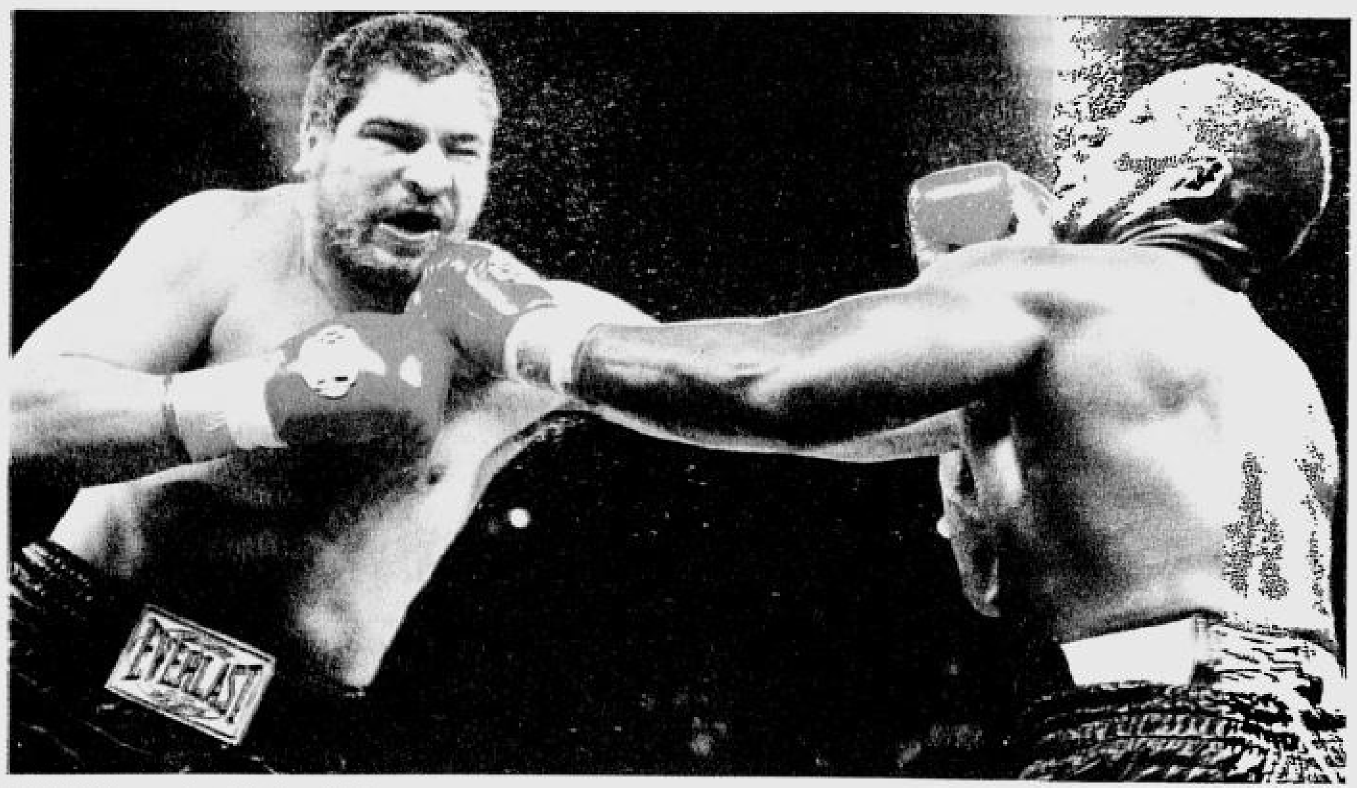


RUIZ (left) connects on the face of Rahman. AFP

Ruiz wins ugly fight vs Rahman

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Watching John Ruiz fight wasn't easy. For Hasim Rahman, beating him was even harder.

In a fight that drew boos almost every round, Ruiz put himself in position for another heavyweight title Saturday night by winning an ugly but unanimous decision over Rahman.

Ruiz got in the harder and cleaner punches, but also held Rahman after almost every flurry in his first fight since losing the WBA title in a poor performance against Roy Jones Jr. in March.

The fight went all 12 rounds, and the crowd booed loudly when it ended with Ruiz winning by 118-110 on one scorecard, 116-112 on a second and 115-114 on a third. The Associated Press had Ruiz ahead 117-112.

"I know it wasn't a pretty fight. I want to apologize for that," Ruiz said. "I was more cautious than I was going in and fighting him."

The fight between the two former heavyweight champions was billed as being for the WBA interim heavyweight title, with the winner becoming champion if Jones refuses to fight him.

That appears likely, though Ruiz did little to show that he can be considered among the heavyweight elite.

"That was as ugly as it could be," Rahman said.

It surely wasn't pretty, but it was effective. From the opening bell Ruiz went in and threw a punch or two, then tied up Rahman before he could respond.

American challenger Travis Simms captured the World Boxing Association super welterweight title here Saturday, knocking out Mexico's Alejandro Garcia in a battle of unbeatens.

Simms, 23-0 with 18 knockouts, broke from a clinch and fired a powerful let hook to the chin that dropped the champion to the canvas, where referee Sam Viruet counted out Garcia after one minute and 41 seconds of the fifth round.

Garcia, who had knocked out all but one of his prior foes, fell to 22-1. He protested that Simms' blow came too soon after Viruet pushed them apart after the clinch. *AP*

Spinks stuns Mayorga, snares 'welter' titles

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—A quarter-century after his father shocked everyone by beating Muhammad Ali, Cory Spinks boxed his way to a majority decision Saturday over the heavily favored Ricardo Mayorga to win the undisputed welterweight title.

Moving, jabbing and staying away from Mayorga's wild punches, Spinks, the son of Leon Spinks, frustrated Mayorga from the opening bell and took advantage of two point deductions to add Mayorga's WBA and WBC titles to the IBF 147-pound title he brought to the ring.

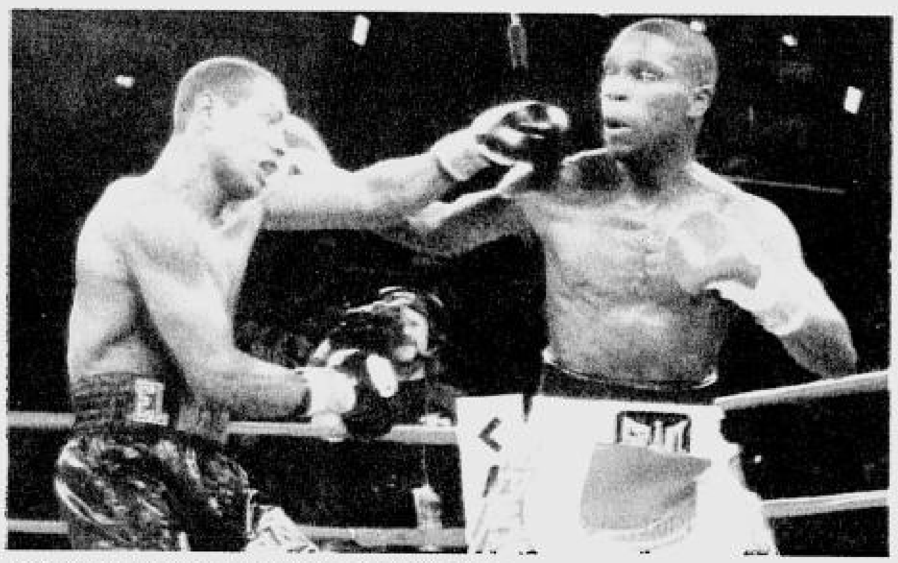
Judge John Keane had Spinks winning 117-110, while Eugene Grant had him ahead 114-112, and Arthur Ellensen had it 114-114. The Associated Press had Spinks winning 114-112.

After the decision was announced, Spinks erupted in jubilation and hugged both his father and his uncle, former heavyweight champion Michael Spinks. Leon Spinks cried in the corner in joy over his son's win.

A disappointed Mayorga, who had called Spinks various names before the fight, then kissed Spinks' hand and put the three belts around his waist.

"He was a man to come up to me and apologize," Spinks said. "I've worked hard all my life. I'm a man, not a boy."

Mayorga's wild ways didn't help, costing him two penalty points that gave the fight to Spinks. *AP*



SPINKS (right) lands a punch to the head of Mayorga. REUTERS

Hopkins remains middleweight king

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Bernard Hopkins kept the undisputed world middleweight championship here Saturday, taking a unanimous 12-round decision over fellow American William Joppy.

Hopkins, who turns 38 next month, won his record 17th consecutive title defense by judges' scores of 119-109, 118-109 and 119-108, improving his record to 43-2 with one draw.

"The Executioner" has won 18 fights in a row since losing to Roy Jones more than 10 years ago. That is Hopkins' only defeat since his pro debut in 1988.

Joppy, 33, fell to 34-3 with one draw. But Joppy did win a 50,000-dollar bet he had with Hopkins, who vowed he would knock out the challenger or pay him the money.

"The money doesn't mean anything," Joppy said.

Joppy climbed into the ring just five months after the death of his infant daughter Vashti. Joppy had not fought in 14 months.

"I don't know what it was but I just couldn't get off," Joppy said. "Maybe that year and a half layoff had something to do with it. I just couldn't do what I wanted to do. He hit me but never hurt me." *AFP*

Judah KOs foe, eyes Tszyu

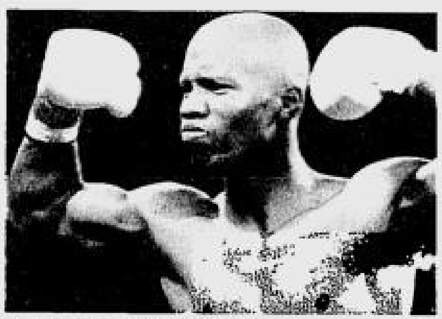
ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—American Zab Judah knocked out Colombian Jaime Rangel in 72 seconds here Saturday to keep the World Boxing Organization junior welterweight title, then called out rival Kostya Tszyu.

Brooklyn native Judah improved to 30-1 with his 22nd career knockout, dropping Rangel to 29-5 as part of a record-setting eight world-title card.

Judah stunned Rangel with a solid left and knocked Rangel onto his back with a powerful right. Referee Frank Cappuccino counted out the Colombian as he lay staring at the arched ceiling of Boardwalk Hall.

"I hit him with my left hand and I knew I hurt him. Then I hit him with my right and I knew I had put him out," Judah said. "I said from the beginning I was going to steal the show and I think I did."

Judah had fought only twice in two years since losing to Russian-born Australian Tszyu for the undisputed junior welterweight title. *AFP*



JUDAH celebrates his win. AFP

Coke Tigers take Reinforced crown

From page A25

ning last year's All-Filipino Cup on Christmas Day.

Atrocious freethrow shooting also did the Beermen in as they missed 12 of their 28 free throws. In comparison, the Tigers buried 14 of 18 from the line, a factor that proved crucial in the entire series.

"The feeling is that of accomplishment more than anything else. Not to brag, but winning the last conference for two straight years is a testament to our superior conditioning throughout the season," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

Securing his fourth title since 1994, Reyes joined Robert Jaworski, Yeng Guiao and the late Ed Ocampo in seventh place on the list of the PBA's winningest coaches.

Injuries to key players Rafi Reavis, Rudy Hatfield, Poch Juinio and Rob Wainwright slowed the Tigers down, but Reyes said his players shrugged it off until the final game of the championship.

Reavis will undergo surgery for a slipped disc and Hatfield on a bum knee, while Juinio goes through arthroscopic repair on his knee. Wainwright will not be operated on but is nursing an injured left ankle.

The Reinforced crown is the result of a very long season for the Tigers, who played 65 games this year and saw action in three straight championships.

Jeffrey Cariaso, who backstopped McClary during the Tigers' fourth-quarter assault, was named Finals MVP.

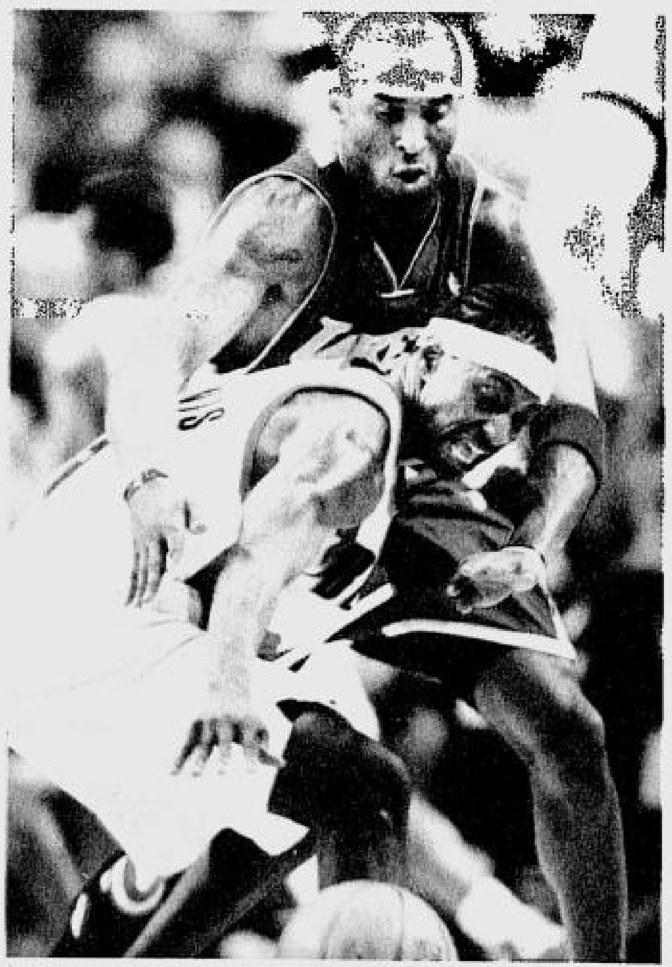
The Beermen had a furious start, speeding away to a 27-21 advantage in the first quarter as Kwan Johnson, Dondon Hontiveros, Dorian Peña and Nic Belasco combined in a fiery offensive.

But McClary led a 19-8 blitz that overhauled the deficit and gave the Tigers a 40-35 lead which they maintained until the halftime buzzer, 43-41.

COCA-COLA 92—McClary 25, Morano 14, Cariaso 13, Hatfield 10, Wainwright 8, Juinio 7, Abarrientos 7, Hawkins 4, Reavis 4.

SAN MIGUEL 84—Peña 23, Hontiveros 19, Johnson 11, Belasco 11, Ildefonso 10, Victoria 6, Racela 4, Menta 0.

Quarters: 21-27, 44-41, 65-59, 92-84.



BRYANT (top) and Portland Trail Blazers Jeff McInnis go after the ball. AP

Grizzlies notch biggest victory

Lakers suffer another loss

MEMPHIS—Bonzi Wells scored 22 points as the Memphis Grizzlies recorded the biggest win in the history of the franchise by crushing the New Jersey Nets, 110-63, in the NBA on Saturday.

NBA RESULTS

Celtics 105, Cavaliers 98; Knicks 95, Nuggets 88; Magic 105, Hawks 102; Grizzlies 110, Nets 63; Bulls 86, Pacers 75; Trail Blazers 112, Lakers 108; Clippers 106, Suns 91

Memphis had six players in double-figures, including Mike Miller and Stromile Swift with 18 points each, as it outdid its previous best of 124-92 over Atlanta in March.

Miller added seven assists, while Pau Gasol had 12 points and nine rebounds for the Grizzlies, which also allowed the fewest points in one game in franchise history.

New Jersey, for which Kenyon Martin high-scored with 12 points, had won four straight but came within one point of its lowest ever score in a game.

Memphis shot 62 percent from the field to win a fourth straight game at home.

In Cleveland, Paul Pierce scored 41 points to help Boston to its fifth straight win, 105-98.

Pierce added nine rebounds and six assists, Vin Baker added 16 points and Mike James had 13 points and nine assists as the Celtics registered its 12th straight win over Cleveland.

LeBron James had a career-high 37 points in a losing cause for Cleveland, while Carlos Boozer chipped in with 17 points and 15 rebounds.

In Atlanta, Tracy McGrady scored 30 points as Orlando got its third win, 105-102, in the last four outings after snapping its 19-game losing streak.

Shareef Abdur-Rahim scored 25 points and Stephen Jackson added 20 for Atlanta, which has lost seven of its last eight games.

In New York, Keith Van Horn scored 16 points as the Knicks beat Denver, 95-88. Antonio McDyess and Allan Houston both added 15 points for the Knicks.

In Portland, Rasheed Wallace had 28 points, seven rebounds and five assists as the Trail Blazers handed the Los Angeles Lakers their second straight loss, 112-108.

In San Antonio, Manu Ginobili scored 16 points as the Spurs beat Houston, 86-73.

Rasho Nesterovic added 14 points while Tony Parker had 10 points and 12 assists for San Antonio. Steve Francis led Houston with 17 points, while Yao Ming added 11 points and nine rebounds. *Reuters*

Game draws world-record crowd

DETROIT—A basketball world-record crowd of 78,129 attended Saturday's game at Ford Field between No. 8 University of Kentucky and No. 21 Michigan State University.

The sport's previous attendance record was 75,000, set in 1951 when the Harlem Globetrotters played at Olympic Stadium in Berlin.

The National Collegiate Athletics Association attendance record is 68,112, set in 1990 at the Louisiana Superdome when the University of Notre Dame played Louisiana State University. The NBA record is 62,046 for a Chicago-Atlanta game at the Georgia Dome in 1998.

Ford Field is home to the National Football League's Detroit Lions. *AP*

Red Star Rising wins Gold Cup, ₱2-M prize

From page A32

The handsome 3-year-old chestnut colt responded briskly to the strong handling of veteran Manolito Daquis to score a half-length victory in the 2,000-meter classic.

"*Nag-abang lang ako at nagparemate pagsungaw ng rekta. Alam ko mananalo ang lakas ng dating eh* (I just played a wait-and-see game and made a move only nearing the homestretch. I knew we'd make it because he's coming in strongly)," said Daquis after notching his first PGC triumph.

Winning owner

The win also gave owner Michael Trillana and trainer Ruben Clor their first taste of success in the country's most prestigious race.

Trillana was represented by his father Francis, a former Philracom commissioner, during the awarding ceremony.

The younger Trillana could not make it yesterday because he's still mourning the recent death of his first-born child he and wife Kate named Angelito.

"I'll cherish this win forever. This is for Angelito. He's an angel on our side," said Michael, a director of the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Organization (Philtobo), referring to the baby boy who died 24 hours after birth.

A MUD-SPLATTERED Daquis raises his whip as Red Star Rising enters the winner's enclosure.

JESS YUSON

A teary-eyed Francis Trillana received the PGC from Pampanga Vice Gov. Mikey Arroyo, who represented race honoree President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"This is a big win for us. Congratulations, Michael," he said. "Lito (Daquis) did a great job. I also salute Ruben (Clor) for superbly conditioning Red Star Rising."

Sired by Khozaam out of former imported campaigner and stakes winner Ito's Choice, Red Star Rising stayed in the middle of the 11-horse pack in the early going before passing tiring rivals at the backside and setting his sights on the leaders.

As West Bound barreled ahead at the home turn, Red Star Rising charged boldly on the outside, setting the stage for the thrilling stretch duel.

"*Naka-isa rin* (At last I got one)," gushed Clor, a seasoned trainer who took over only recently from Alfredo Abobo, as relatives and friends swarmed around him.

Breeder

Red Star Rising, bred by another former Philracom commissioner, Jose "Bebo" Quiros, timed 2:07 over the distance which he tackled for only the first time. It was his fifth win in 13 starts thus far.

West Bound, denied a sweep in the 2003 Triple Crown, settled for P500,000 as he suffered another heartbreaking loss, also under Jonathan Hernandez.

Mica's Magic (Cesar Domingo Jr.) finished third then came Diktador (Eldy Salvador), last year's winner Free Wind (Jeffril Zarate), Lyonnais (Val Dilema), Material Maker (Pat Dilema), Success Story (Fernando Raquel Jr.), High Octane (Dominador Borbe Jr.), Silver Story (Jesse Guce) and Perfect Storm (Jeffrey Ladiana).

Red Star Rising, previously handled by either Virgilio Camañero or Isaac Aguila before Daquis was tapped, attracted only P99,989 in sales out of the P2,222,567 total.

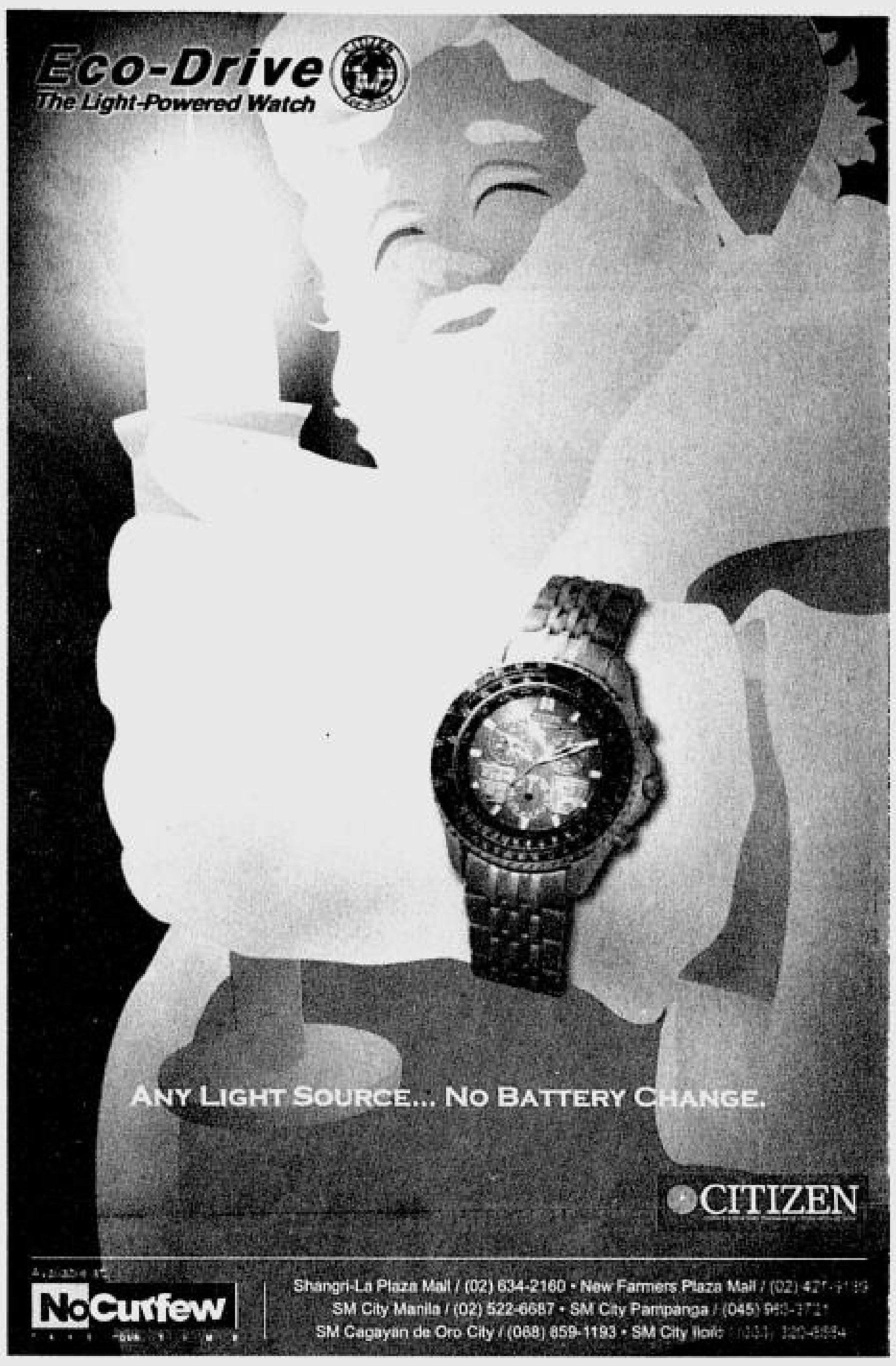
Meanwhile, War Hero caught Dandansoy at the wire to rule the Hopeful Stakes, while Buena Sera held off Real Slew to prevail in the Chairman Jaime Dilag and Commissioners' Cup.

War Hero, owned by John Mendoza and trained by his father Rudy, pocketed P300,000, the same amount won by Buena Sera.

Pat Dilema rode War Hero (Medium Cool-Palace Heights), while Salvador partnered Buena Sera (Ascot Knight-Joaquinha).

FRANCIS Trillana receives the Presidential Gold Cup from Pampanga Vice Gov. Mikey Arroyo. Looking on is Don Antonio Floirendo Sr.

JESS YUSON



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HONG KONG RACE
French jockey Dominique Boeuf (right) celebrates aboard French entry Vallee Enchantee as he crosses the wire to win the Hong Kong Vase at the Shatin race track in Hong Kong yesterday. At left is third-placed Philip Robinson on British horse Warrsan, and second-finisher Christophe Soumillon (pink cap) on French horse Polish Summer.

AP

Hall of Fame female jockey out of hospital

INGLEWOOD, California—Hall of Fame jockey Julie Krone was released from a hospital Saturday after suffering severe bruises to her upper chest and right shoulder in a spill at Hollywood Park.

There were no fractures of her vertebrae or ribs, Dr. Steven Schwartz, an orthopedist at Centinela Hospital Medical Center, added in a prepared statement issued by Hollywood Park.

It was unclear how long the 40-year-old jockey would be sidelined.

In the statement, Krone described her status as "day to day" until she gets a more complete diagnosis. She planned to see her personal orthopedic surgeon early next week.

Krone was thrown to the ground Friday during a 7 1/2-furlong claiming race for 3-year-olds and up when her horse, Clover Situation, collided with Skidoo.

Skidoo, ridden by David Nuesch, had fractured his right foreleg midway down the backstretch and fallen directly into the path of Krone.

Nuesch escaped serious injury. Skidoo, a 4-year-old colt, was euthanized and Clover Situation wasn't injured.

Krone has 3,704 career wins and has been among the leading riders in Southern California since ending a 3 1/2-year retirement in November 2002. She was inducted into racing's Hall of Fame in 2000 and is the only woman to ride winners of a Triple Crown race and a Breeders' Cup race.

Krone has bounced back from several serious injuries during her career, most recently from a spill March 8 at Santa Anita when she broke two bones in her lower back and suffered two compression fractures of vertebrae. *AP*

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SPORTS

Red Star Rising wins PGC

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Trillana colt bags record ₱2-M prize

By Edwin Villanueva

LONGSHOT Red Star Rising outkicked top choice West Bound down the stretch to win the 31st Presidential Gold Cup and the record P2-million first prize that went with it yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

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SR	825,000	123,750	60,001	41,376	32,920	23,652	19,330	16,429
GSX	790,000	118,500	57,303	39,515	31,441	22,589	18,468	15,690
GLX	750,000	112,500	54,220	37,389	29,752	21,376	17,475	14,846
GL	678,000	101,700	48,670	33,562	26,710	19,190	15,689	13,326
DLX	643,000	96,450	45,972	31,702	25,232	18,128	14,280	12,588

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FedEx staying in RP, plans expansion

By Abigail L. Ho

COURIER services provider Federal Express is definitely not leaving the Philippines and has in fact reserved a 50-hectare property in the Clark Special Economic Zone to house a hub that will complement its existing operations in the Subic Freeport.

Clark International Airport Inc. president and chief executive Adelberto Yap said in an interview that the Tennessee-based firm was definitely here to stay, despite talk that it would be transferring its regional hub to China.

"We've had some initial consultations and discussions with FedEx officials. In fact, they've been here (Clark) twice already to look at the available pieces of property," he told the INQUIRER.

FedEx's contract with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority for the lease of the property housing its regional hub there would expire in 2007.

Yap said the courier services provider was looking at building a complementary hub in Clark as it did not have enough room for further expansion in Subic.

However, he said FedEx was not likely to completely shut down its Subic operations as it had already invested a huge sum of money to establish the infrastructure it needed to have a regional hub there.

FedEx management still has up to 2007 to decide whether to completely transfer its regional hub operations to Clark or to maintain its hub in Subic while also operating in Clark, he said.

In an earlier interview, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza said Alberto Lina, chair of FedEx's sole Philippine licensee Airfreight 2100 Inc., even paid President Maca-

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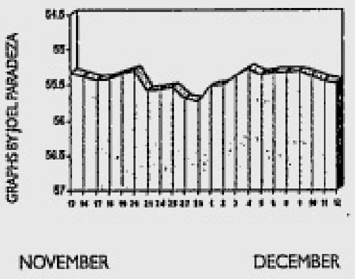

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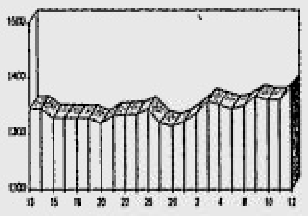
December 14, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.818800	1.000000	55.4100
Japan	Yen	0.007585	0.009263	0.5133
United Kingdom	Pound	1.428232	1.744300	96.6517
Hongkong	Dollar	0.105458	0.128796	7.1366
Switzerland	Franc	0.644826	0.787526	43.6368
Canada	Dollar	0.621527	0.759071	42.0601
Singapore	Dollar	0.477017	0.582581	32.2808
Australia	Dollar	0.602413	0.735727	40.7666
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.171998	2.652661	146.9839
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.218347	0.266667	14.7760
Brunei	Dollar	0.475632	0.580889	32.1871
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000097	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020604	0.025164	1.3943
UAE	Dirham	0.222948	0.272287	15.0874
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.221300	67.6722
Argentina	Peso	0.278031	0.339559	18.8150
Brazil	Real	0.278408	0.340020	18.8405
Denmark	Kroner	0.134379	0.164117	9.0937
India	Rupee	0.017987	0.021968	1.2172
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215485	0.263172	14.5824
Mexico	New Peso	0.073554	0.089831	4.9775
New Zealand	Dollar	0.527068	0.643708	35.6679
Norway	Kroner	0.122388	0.149472	8.2822
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014358	0.017535	0.9716
South Africa	Rand	0.128214	0.156588	8.6765
Korea	Won	0.000689	0.000842	0.0467
Sweden	Kroner	0.111254	0.135875	7.5288
Syria	Pound	0.018660	0.022789	1.2627
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024104	0.029438	1.6312
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000513	0.000627	0.0347

STOCK MARKET

Rally seen to continue

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

LOCAL stocks are seen to continue their upswing this week, buoyed by strong yearend buying which leads to the seasonal yearend rally.

Last week, the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 37.95 points or 2.82 percent to close at 1383.32 on Friday, driven by the strong buying of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. shares on a rosy earnings outlook for 2004.

"We'll still see further upside. We are now nearing our target for the index of 1,450. We can reach that level this month based on the seasonality of trading," said SB Equities manager for institutional sales Monique Lecaros.

"We've entered a month associated with window dressing. I think there will still be a yearend rally because there are still a lot of buy orders since April," she said.

Lecaros said the market's volume was improving and PLDT was leading the pack as the telecom giant enjoyed good reading based on technicals.

She said investors have now discounted the warning from newly resigned Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho that the country was in a fiscal crisis. She said the market would watch out, however, for any confirmation or verification of such warnings.

"Investors are looking more at technicals these days because the fundamentals are unreliable. As we are now in a political circus, the strategy is simply to look at the charts--buy near the support and sell near the resistance," she said.

She said the stocks that would be interesting this week would still be blue chips PLDT, Ayala Corp., Ayala Land Inc., Meralco and Bank of the Philippine Islands.

"Some people expect Globe to also perform as well as PLDT," Lecaros said.

BPI Securities said: "It is very likely that the market will manage to sustain its gains this week, owing to traditionally strong yearend buying. We may see the market testing its high for the year at 1435."

The positive market sentiment is also influenced by the advance of Wall Street, which breached the 10,000 mark last week.

On Friday, volume turnover was relatively robust at P775.95 million, including P216 million worth of cross sales.

"Investors are taking positions on expectations of strong earnings performances for the year. However, we still see political uncertainties to weigh on the market. Support is at 1345 and resistance is at 1387," BPI Securities said.

Doris C. Dumlao

WHAT'S INSIDE

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- **No Free Lunch** / B4
- **Cocktales** / B7
- **Questions of Policies** / B8

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Food firms buck tariff cover for NSC

By Michelle V. Remo

THREE food manufacturing groups have expressed concern over the possible reimposition of tariff on tinplates in view of the government's intention to protect the mothballed National Steel Corp., whose reoperation is expected to begin early next year.

The Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. (Pampi), the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers Inc. (PCFM), and the Coconut Oil Refiners Association (Cora), in a letter to the Department of Trade and Industry, said imposing tariff on tinplates would result in increased production cost for food processors, which use tin cans for packaging.

Food products that are seen to increase prices with the reimposition of tariff on tinplates include canned milk, fruits, vegetables, poultry, meat, fish and infant food, said PCFM president M.L. Antonio.

Pampi president Felix Tiukinhoy said the cost of tin cans already accounted for 15 percent or P2.7 billion of the industry's annual sales. He said an increase in the cost of tin cans would be a heavy burden for food processors and consumers.

"If protective tariffs are applied, our products will no longer be as affordable as they are now," he said.

The move to oppose the possible reimposition of tariffs on tinplates was in support of the country's tin can manufacturers who earlier asked the Tariff Commission not to allow the reimposition of tariff.

Tariff on imported tinplates stood at zero percent since 1997, when the NSC was shut down.

Porn of government

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IN the beginning was the word, coming from the ever popular BIR, the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

For those of you who are not allowed to go out at night, the BIR is an avid sponsor of karaoke bars. It is the most popular government outfit among many GROs.

Last month, as the BIR told it to us, from whom it gets (extracts?) a lot of money, the bureau actually even went over its target for … well, getting our money.

It was supposed to be some sort of good news! No kidding, we must jump for joy! So what's good about the BIR's overdoing this activity of getting our money?

Excuse me? It still gets the money we worked hard for, and it's not as if it just confiscated the money in some famous secret bank accounts here and abroad. Oops!

* * *

NEXT came the Bureau of Customs, or BOC for short, whose commissioner boasted in media releases that his wards were close to breaking the record.

Unlike the BIR, which is popular in the Quezon Avenue bright-light area, the BOC is most popular in the Roxas Boulevard area, from Pasay City and all the way to Mayor Joey's girlie hangout in Parañaque.

But both the BIR and the BOC, according to reports, were doing quite well, thank you. Just like its big brother the BIR, the BOC surpassed its monthly target for getting money from us.

The BOC was a step better than the BIR. As its boss revealed to us excitedly, the BOC was expected to post an all-time high take. Another good news!

* * *

AND so the BIR reported that it exceeded its November target, and the BOC said it would even break the all-time record.

By the sound of their voices in media, with all that good news, the finances of the government, under this cute administration of Gloriaetta, must be doing great.

Pardon me, boss, but the last time I checked, the budget deficit was still yawning. It was still hovering around P200 billion for the year.

Imagine, the BIR and the BOC are already at their best, and yet the government is still short by P200 billion. Something must be terribly wrong here!

* * *

IF the BIR and the BOC are getting all the money they want to get from us, and more, but the government is still broke, I say we have a major problem.

The good news from the BIR and the BOC may not be enough to call for a party. The news only have something to do with the plans of Gloriaetta for 2004.

Whatever the Palace propagandists say, we just cannot keep on living like this. You know—money collection is at its best with still a P200-billion deficit!

We have a situation here, and it may be what the former "exhausted" Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho called "fiscal crisis." In short, major problem!

* * *

TO many in business, when Camacho talked about the crisis, he sounded like a man who was just getting off his chest the frustration in his old job as finance secretary.

Camacho did not say it, of course, but it seemed like he was almost ready to give up on this country. It's always the first sign of job frustration—surrender.

Still, the highly paid investment banker before he was hypnotized into the Cabinet of Gloriaetta, wanted for a solution a change in the form of government.

We even heard echoes from important figures in business. They all agreed with Camacho. This set-up we have is just not working. Let's change it.

The way I see it, they seem desperate. We are facing extreme times, a crisis, in fact, and we have extreme problems, calling for extreme measures. Why not just shoot everybody by the wall instead?

* * *

IF the solution is to change the form of government, from presidential to parliamentary, for instance, I take it that the problem is the system.

And all this time, down here in our barangay, the guys were thinking that any system may not work as long as we have the same people running it.

It's like, well, the best and the brightest among us are telling us that, when something doesn't work properly, let's change it, and not the operator.

Sure, the parliamentary system works in other Asian countries, and so it must work for us. In logic, they also have a term for such a fallacy.

The system works in other Asian countries because they mostly apply a strong, iron-hand form of governance which inspires discipline or else…

* * *

HERE, I promise to crawl on broken glass naked, if the best and the brightest can also promise me that the change in the form of government is a sure hit.

For I think that it is still the leadership, whatever system is in place, which matters most in the development of any country. Emphasis on the LEADER please!

And so, Camacho, explaining his failure in Finance, said he could not get any of his important bills passed in Congress, ergo, the system sucks!

We grew up believing that the job of the President is, precisely, to sweet-talk, buy off, and threaten congressmen into acting on his or her agenda.

And if the administration cannot even work on congressmen to get its programs going, we can say that it must be watching a lot of porno, using government time and money, or it must be doing nothing but campaigning a lot from the start.

* * *

BECAUSE a leader inspires people to do something, anything, even die, if it must come to that, and not mind the sacrifice.

I am afraid that we have not been blessed enough to have such a leader throughout our history. It is the only explanation to all the corruption going on.

The example must come from the top. If it does not, well, we can already see the result. Today in this country, nobody in public office fears scandals anymore.

You can just do what you want, and when you get caught, you can just deny it, anyway, by fighting it out in media with a battalion of PR guys.

And if nobody believes the denial campaign, tough luck, you still do not go to jail, and you still get to keep the money you stole.

In business, they are batting for a change in the form of government. I don't know if it will stop the crooks from laughing all the way to the bank in Hong Kong.

* * *

ALRIGHT, the good news from the BIR and the BOC might have served to deal with the recent confession of Camacho about the fiscal crisis.

What crisis? Look, the BIR is even overdoing it, and the BOC is setting a new record. The crisis must be in the mind of some spurned former Cabinet member! Something like that.

But the crisis is real. Based on IMF projection, if we do not do anything about it today, as in, right this minute as we speak, we cannot do anything about it anymore after three years. We will just go down and down uncontrollably.

The worst part is, after that, in only 10 years, we are doomed. We are back to the debt crisis of the 1980s. Nobody will lend to us anymore. That scary!

* * *

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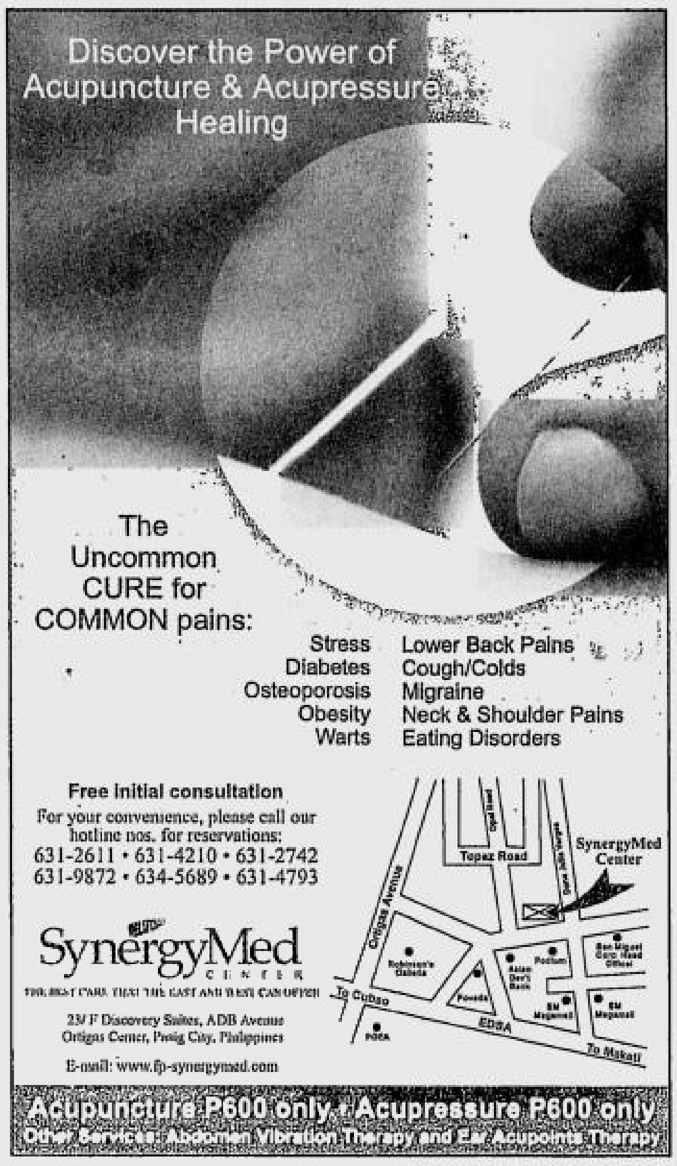

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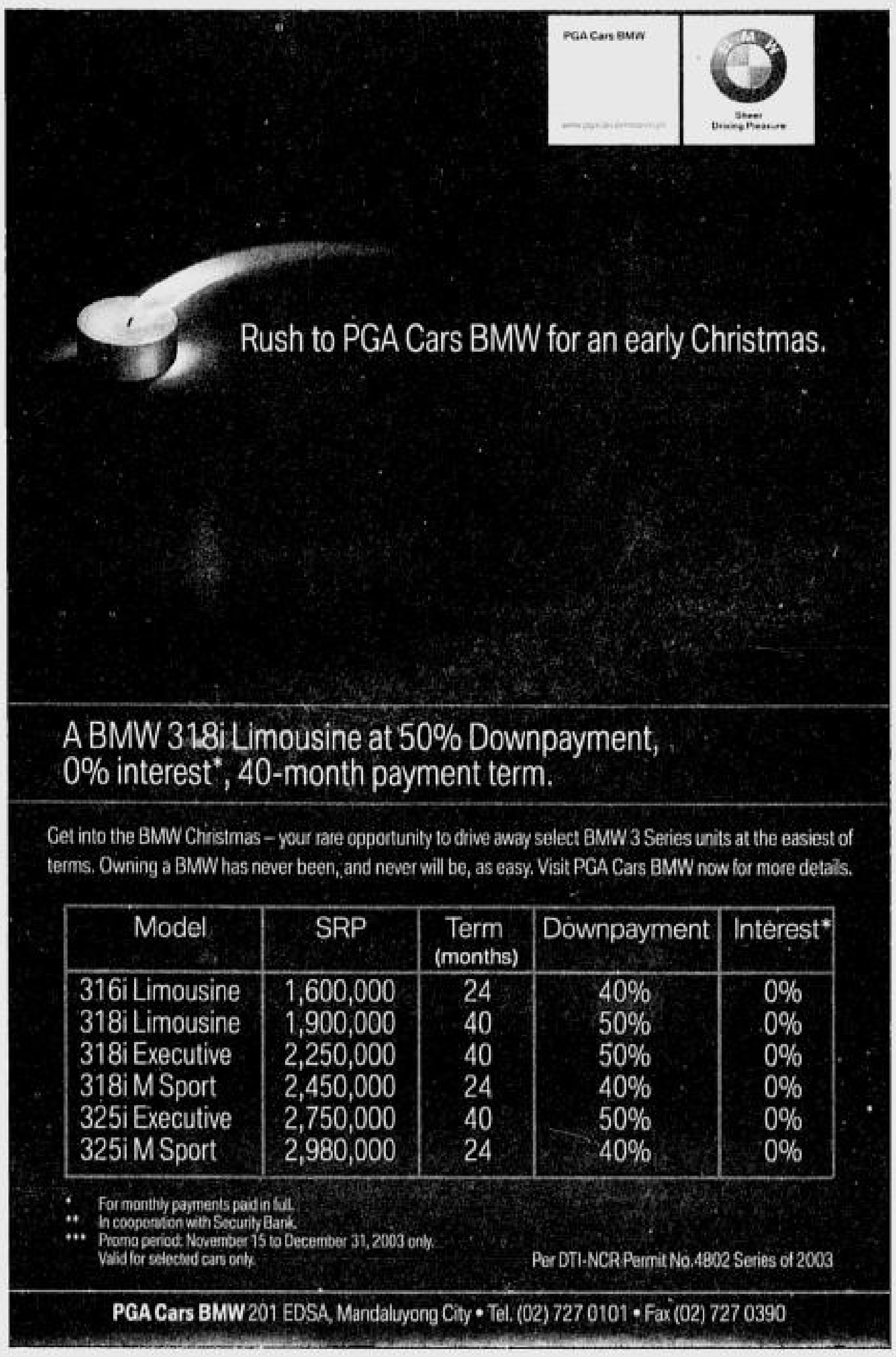

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Breaktime

From page B2

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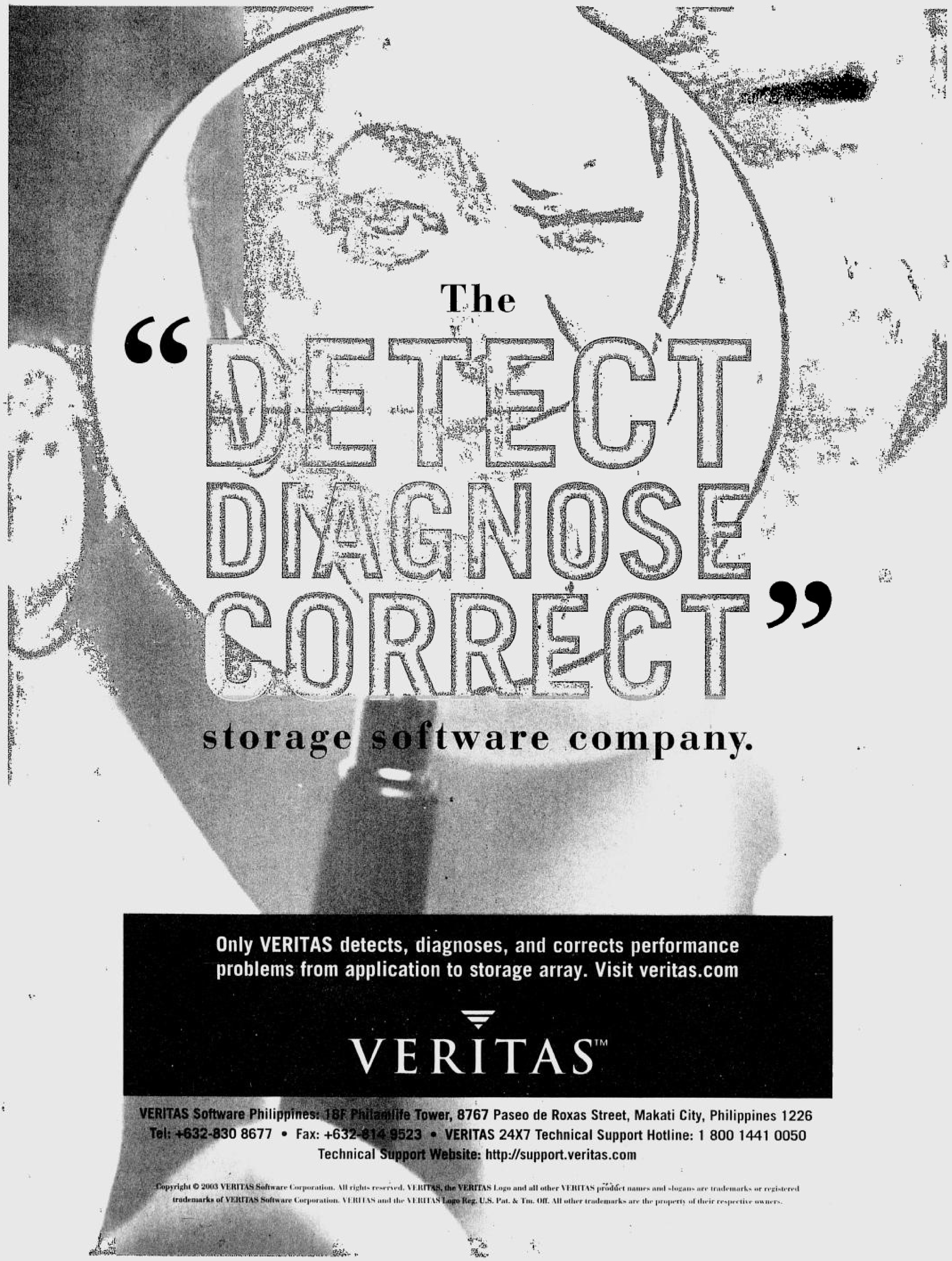

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NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

IT MAY be no coincidence that the two worst performing economies among the five original Asean members (or Asean-5), namely the Philippines and Indonesia, are archipelagic countries. We are a country of around 7,100 islands—plus a few more during low tide, as the joke goes. Indonesia is a country of around 13,600 islands. That we have been able to achieve slightly better economic indicators than Indonesia may be a function of the fact that they have almost twice as many islands to manage and unify than we do.

Having just come from the first East Asian Seas Congress in Putrajaya, Malaysia, last week, it has dawned on me, just as it must have for the many other Filipino participants of that conference, how much we have neglected the fact that our country's territory is four-fifths water, and only one-fifth land. And yet all these years, our development planning has been dominantly preoccupied with our land-based resources and economic activities. It is quite likely that the Indonesians have been just as guilty of this, partly explaining the similarity of our lackluster economic situations.

Peculiar needs, peculiar benefits

It is obvious that a country broken up into numerous islands would require a different approach to development than one with a largely contiguous land area, like Thailand. Most obviously, the cost and efficiency of internal transport (i.e. inter-island versus land transport) can be widely divergent. Opportunities for economies of scale in providing energy infrastructure, particularly electrification, are more limited with a geographically fragmented territory. The communication network would likewise be more expensive and probably less efficient in an archipelagic setting. And because of more limited opportunities for direct people-to-people contacts, building a sense of nationhood especially through political and cultural unity is a much greater challenge than in a country with contiguous land territory.

It is not all downsides, to be sure. The seas in between our islands and along our coasts are immensely rich in natural resources and economic value, arising not only from the value of the fishery and other marine resources contained therein, but also from the value of potential tourism and other services (e.g. tidal energy) they could provide. It is quite likely that a square kilometer of sea contains higher potential economic value than a corresponding square kilometer of undeveloped land. The challenge is in harnessing the economic value of the seas in a sustainable way, i.e. without depleting marine resources or destroying marine habitats through pollution or outright destruction (e.g. through dynamite fishing).

Multi-modal transport system

These suggest the specific elements that need to be addressed in development planning for an archipelago. First, islands must be interconnected with efficient air and sea transport facilities. President Macapagal-Arroyo's vision of a "Strong Republic Nautical Highway" based on roll on-roll off shipping facilities serving major islands from Appari to Jolo tries to address this need.

In the 1990s, a general blueprint for a nationwide multi-modal transport system was developed by an inter-agency group composed of the Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda). The idea was to provide a seamless transport system wherein passengers and cargo could easily move between different modes of transport, say transfer to a railway system from the seaport, and then on to the airport.

Why the original LRT system stopped short of connecting to the domestic airport just a few hundred meters from its terminal remains a mystery to me, and is a prime example of what is wrong with our infrastructure planning. I could not even attribute it to lack of coordination because both the LRT and the airports are under the same government department (DOTC). For the same reason, it is a mortal sin that the Marikina-Cubao MRT line was not connected seamlessly to the Edsa MRT line in the same way the latter connects to the original LRT line on Taft Avenue.

Due importance

If we truly appreciate the peculiar archipelagic nature of our country, we should have had separate Cabinet-level government departments for fisheries and maritime affairs long ago. As it is, fisheries are relegated to a line bureau under the Department of Agriculture, which has traditionally been unable to cater effectively to the needs of the crop and livestock sectors, let alone fisheries. We should also have a separate department dedicated to strengthening the maritime sector covering shipping, shipbuilding and ship repair, among other things—things that an archipelagic country like ours would normally be expected to be inherently strong in.

In a visit to Croatia some years ago, I recall how our hosts proudly described their country as an archipelago composed of over 1,000 islands. And because of this, they said, they had a long tradition in shipbuilding and a very strong shipbuilding and ship repair industry. I was toured around their impressive shipyards, and was struck by another fact: the country does not even have a domestic steel industry; all the steel that they turn into ships are imported! This reminded me of those who had been arguing that we should have our own integrated steel industry if we are to industrialize. These were the same people who asked for very high trade protection on steel at the expense of the competitiveness (and to the detriment of the consumers) of the downstream industries that had been in place long before.

It seems to me that until we have a clear vision for the country built on a strong recognition of the strengths as well as requirements of an archipelagic economy, we will never get out of our persistent mediocre performance amid our dynamic non-archipelagic neighbors.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

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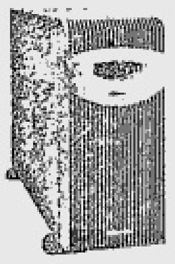

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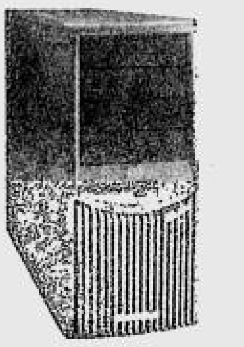

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BIR sets 15% withholding tax rate on all professionals

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue are scheduled to issue today a regulation that will set at 15 percent the creditable withholding tax rate on all professionals earning P720,000 a year starting Jan. 1, 2004, to improve collections next year and plug tax leaks.

But while the new regulation would increase by half the rate on all other professionals currently paying a 10-percent withholding tax, it would effectively reduce the tax burden of entertainers who have been paying a 20-percent withholding tax since September 2001 following a strong lobby from the members of the movie industry.

Sources said that back-channel discussions were made between entertainers and government officials on several items including the withholding tax rate as part of Malacañang's quiet efforts to court the support of the the influential members of show business.

A source said the lower withholding tax rate should appease the entertainment sector considering that it would reduce their tax burden by 25 percent.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. denied that the government struck a compromise with entertainers.

"Early this year, we already announced that we would impose a uniform withholding tax rate for all professionals because entertainers were complaining that they were singled out by the 2001 regulation. This is just a fulfillment of our commitment," the BIR chief said in an interview.

The government originally planned to increase the creditable withholding rate to 20 percent for all professionals earning P1 million and up but agreed to fine-tune the regulation after conducting public hearings in the last two weeks where professionals, particularly lawyers, doctors and accountants arrived at a consensus that 15 percent would be a reasonable rate.

Professionals earning below P720,000 a year would still be subject to a 10-percent creditable withholding tax rate.

"Now, the regulation would cover all professionals and not just entertainers so while the tax rate was reduced for actors, it would go up for the others," Parayno said.

A withholding tax deducted in advance from an individual is eventually subtracted from the final obligation that a taxpayer eventually remits to the government during tax payment season.

The new policy would supplement a BIR regulation starting January that finally imposed the 10-percent value-added tax on professionals and banks, which were spared from the impost since 1996 when all other sectors were required to pay the VAT. Pending before Congress is a law bringing back the 5-percent gross receipts tax for the financial sector in lieu of VAT and restoring the exemption of doctors and lawyers from the value-added impost.

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SMC sees 10% earnings growth

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elena R. Torrijos

SAN MIGUEL Corp., Southeast Asia's biggest food and beverage conglomerate, expects to end the year with at least a 10 percent rise in profits.

SMC president Ramon Ang told reporters Friday night that SMC's sales were growing across product lines by about 15 percent in volume terms except for bottling unit Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc.

Asked why CCBPI products were not posting higher volumes, Ang explained there were some schools which were discouraging the consumption of soft drinks by their students. He said these distribution kinks should be resolved next year.

The SMC president said the company should see at least a 25 percent growth in revenues in 2004 with election spending driving a big part of the growth.

Ang also confirmed that SMC was in talks with the Indofood group in Indonesia, which is owned by the Salim family.

"If ever we will do a deal with anybody in the region it is just purely (for an) acquisition. We don't want to get into distribution," Ang told reporters.

He cited that in 1998, 50 percent of Indofood was offered to SMC but the latter rejected the offer.

PT Indomarco Adi Prima, a trading unit of PT Indofood Sukee Makmur, the world's largest noodle maker, was reportedly approached by SMC to distribute food and beverage products in Indonesia.

"We are still talking but as of the moment there is really nothing yet we can say," he said.

PSE starts trading own shares today; IPO set in '04

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange starts the public trading of its own shares today, setting the precedent for listing of company shares by introduction or without a public offering.

This move is in partial compliance with the requirements of the Securities Regulation Code.

The PSE has one year to make a public offering to comply with the SRC's provision to dilute the ownership of the member-brokers.

Manuel Tordesillas, president of PSE's listing advisor ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners, said in an interview that the PSE's book value amounted to P105 per share.

The PSE's 184 member-brokers were given 50,000 PSE shares each in exchange for their seats in the PSE when the local bourse converted itself from a mutually-owned company into a stock corporation in 2001.

Promulgated in the aftermath of the BW Resources Corp. price manipulation scandal, the new securities law required the demutualization of the stock exchange to prevent any single industry from owning more than 20 percent of total equity.

PSE president Ernest Leung said the market would not likely see any volatile movement in the PSE's share prices since the shares are kept in the hands of the member-brokers.

ATR-Kim Eng Capital prepared the prospectus for the PSE's listing which would be distributed during the inaugural trading today, he said.

ABS-CBN not worried about ABC-5

BROADCASTING giant ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. is unfazed by competition from Associated Broadcasting Co. (ABC-5), which was recently taken over by businessman Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco.

ABS-CBN chief finance officer Randolph Estrellado recently told reporters that the 50-year-old network enjoyed an edge because it had a stronghold over the mass market.

He expected profitability to continue improving next year.

"It will be a challenge for any third network to break the duopolistic nature of Philippine television," he said.

ABS-CBN and bitter rival GMA 7 lord it over the television ratings, leaving other networks far behind in the race.

He said ABC-5 or any third player would have to invest heavily in infrastructure to pose a significant challenge to the two networks.

Cojuangco earlier said that ABC-5 would compete against ABS-CBN and GMA-7 by enticing the middle class to watch free television.

He said his group was preparing a war chest to reposition ABC-5 as a "strong third" in the broadcasting industry by next year.

Estrellado, for his part, said advertising growth next year would continue to drive ABS-CBN's revenue, accounting for 75 percent of total revenue. *Doris C. Dumlao*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 12, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ Bank	17	17.25	17	17.25	65,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46.5	46	46.5	860,700
China Banking Corp.	660	665	660	665	950
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	2,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	800,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	26.5	26	26.5	7,900
Philippine National Bank	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	3,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	100
Security Bank Corp.	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	4,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	25	25	25	25	1,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Abacus Financial	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1720	1730	1720	1730	480
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1325	1325	1310	1315	1,930
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	25	25	25	25	2,000
Diversified Fin. Network	2	2	2	2	12,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	760	785	760	780	85,670
Ipeople Inc.	1	1	0.98	1	140,000
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.044	0.045	0.044	0.044	2,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.041	5,300,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.84	0.87	0.84	0.85	3,900,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.46	1.46	1.4	1.44	464,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	865	885	865	880	446,340
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	9,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	14.75	15	164,900
Manila Electric Co. B	23.5	24.25	23.5	24	3,814,100
Petron Corporation	2.18	2.22	2.18	2.2	4,382,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	20,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.92	0.9	0.92	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.15	3.25	3.15	3.2	687,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	440,000
Sanitary Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	170,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	2,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	6,700
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	54.5	54	54.5	14,300
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	19,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	350,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	70,000
Ayala Corp.	5	5.1	5	5.1	21,217,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	71,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.026	0.025	0.025	6,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.86	340,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.4	10	9.4	10	19,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.47	2,460,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	250,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18	18.75	18	18.5	139,800
Ionics Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	37,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	9,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	712,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	520,000
Music Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	190,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1	1	1	12,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	900,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.57	0.58	0.55	0.55	2,600,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	24.25	25	24.25	24.75	99,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,600
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	12,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.7	2,592,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	43,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	500,000
Cyber Bay Corporation	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.145	1,250,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	1,340,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.04	1,255,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.17	0.195	0.17	0.17	680,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	100,000
SM Development Corp	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	97,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.2	6.2	3,244,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co B	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	2,350,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	9,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	25,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	70,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	450,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	100,000
OIL					
Sinophil Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	100,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.175	700,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,797,340	46,777,500.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	68,819,810	690,263,070.00
PRO	11,081,000	37,561,250.00
Mining	36,980,000	1,224,750.00
OIL	800,000	123,900.00
GRAND TOTALS:	119,478,150	775,950,470.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	435.38	UP 3.70
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,083.85	UP 39.57
PRO	544.88	UP 5.68
Mining	1,638.77	DOWN 5.14
OIL	1.36	UNCH 0.00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	848.25	UP 10.41
Composite	1,383.32	UP 23.72

NO. OF ADVANCES: 35, NO. OF DECLINES: 16, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 34, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 85, NO. OF TRADES: 1,654

LNM Holdings improves offer for NSC

By Michelle V. Remo

LNM Holdings N.V., the world's second largest steel firm, has renewed its intention to improve its offer to rehabilitate the mothballed National Steel Corp.

This came after rival steel firm Global Infrastructure Holdings Ltd. said that it expected to soon close a deal with creditor-banks and win the right to take over the assets and operations of NSC.

LNM general manager Eric Tiere said the company hoped to have a dialogue with creditor-banks, adding that it was willing to increase its original bid of P7 billion and pay around P2 billion up front.

The P2-billion cash that LNM was willing to pay is double the P1 billion reportedly offered by GIHL.

"During the exclusivity, we can and will not (formally) negotiate with the banks because that will be outside the legal scope and we will put them into legal trouble. All we can do is share with them our views on what we are willing to do with NSC in the future," Tiere said in a briefing with reporters.

GIHL was granted last month a 90-day period to hold exclusive talks with NSC creditor-banks after besting LNM's P7-billion bid.

Margarito Teves, president of the NSC creditor Land Bank of the Philippines, said the group of creditor-banks are having a smooth discussion with GIHL, whose latest offer was reportedly to pay 38 percent to 40 percent of the total P19 billion owed by NSC to its creditor-banks.

Tiere said LNM was willing to translate into "hot cash" the profit-sharing scheme included in its bid offer to increase the original bid price of P7 billion.

Aside from the actual bid, Tiere said LNM was willing to invest $50 million in working capital—which will cover the purchase of raw materials—and another $20 million for the upgrade of NSC's facilities.

The company official added that LNM was committed to make the NSC fully operational by the end of the first year and twice the original capacity by the second year.

Tiere said LNM was still keen on winning NSC because operating in the Philippines would support its objective of growing in the Asian region.

He also said the high-quality skills of Filipinos as well as their proficiency in the English language were additional factors behind the company's interest in the Philippines.

FedEx staying in RP, plans expansion

From page B1

pagal-Arroyo a visit to assure her that FedEx was here to stay.

"He made a courtesy call to the President and explained FedEx's position to her, that they're going to stay in the Philippines. It's not true that they're pulling out. They're even expanding," he said.

While FedEx admitted that it had already signed a letter of intent (LOI) with the Guangzhou Airport Authority, the firm said this did not mean a relocation of its Asian hub there.

"The LOI is a non-legally binding document, which enables us to gain access to information to enable us to assess the sustainability of the airport as an express hub for Asia," FedEx said in an earlier statement.

"FedEx has no immediate plans to relocate its Asia-Pacific hub from Subic Bay, the Philippines. The company has a lease until August 2007 and an option to renew," it added.

Should FedEx start operating at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, it would be doing business in a territory already occupied by rival United Parcel Service.

UPS chief operating officer Thomas Wiedemeyer said in an earlier interview that the Atlanta-based firm would welcome FedEx's transfer to Clark should it decide to do so.

"Clark provides great infrastructure for big expansion. We welcome the competition. We'll just wait and see what happens," he said.

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CC@ TAGAYTAY	360K	S WOODS "A"	450K	RIVIERA CC	20K
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Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	60,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	70,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	220,000
Canlubang	400,000	450,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	140,000	160,000
Cebu Country Club	1,200,000	Please Call
Celebrity Sports Club	160,000	200,000
Club Filipino	-	160,000
Eagleridge "C"	-	340,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	165,000	180,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	230,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	220,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	Please Call
Manila Golf (Individual)	9,500,000	10,100,000
Manila Polo	Please Call	2,280,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	300,000	400,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	500,000	550,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	400,000
Metroclub "A"	-	100,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	150,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
Montemar (Corporate)	30,000	35,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	158,000	250,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	400,000
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	Please Call	200,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	70,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	170,000	-
Spa & Lodge	600,000	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,000,000	1,250,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	220,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	320,000	370,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	830,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	700,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	140,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	250,000
Valley Golf	250,000	300,000
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CAMP JOHN HAY		215K
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CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	170K	
COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	360K	please call
EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	80K	
EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "B"		100K
EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "B"	280K	
EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100K	
FONTANA "D"	50K	please call
FOREST HILLS "C"	250K	180K
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	290K	please call
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Ind.)	please call	9.5M
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Corp.)	11M	10.7M
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.5M	
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	450K	
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	600K	
MIMOSA C3		280K
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	230K	180K
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	175K	please call
ROCKWELL CLUB	350K	
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	please call	60K
RIVIERA GOLF CLUB	120K	
SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	-	110K
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"		1.0M
VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB-IND.		130K
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EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	80K	
EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "B"		100K
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EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100K	
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Higher yen, higher prices

IF you are still contemplating whether to buy a new car or an SUV, you had better take the plunge and go for it now.

Toyota has already advised its dealers that it will raise the prices for its higher-end, Japan-assembled vehicles after Christmas to reflect the higher exchange rate.

With the yen now hovering at Y108 to $1 from the benchmark Y117-$1, the prices of Camry will be raised by P70,000 for the lower-end model to as high as P120,000 more for the top-of-the-line, 2.4-liter version.

Toyota's family-mover Previa and sports-utility-vehicle Prado, both newly reintroduced fully built imports, will likewise be increased by P100,000 and P150,00, respectively.

The price of the bestseller RAV 4 small SUV will go up by P40,000.

According to the grapevine, the rest of the Japanese car assemblers are just waiting for Toyota, the largest of them, to implement the price adjustment before following suit.

Toyota plans to maintain the prices of the sub-2.0-liter cars but only until the current inventory lasts.

A little tougher, a little later

THE BANGKO Sentral has uncovered a new trail of fund misuse from its headache ward, Banco Filipino.

Bangko Sentral examiners discovered that Banco Filipino lent more than P1.8 billion in loans in excess of Dosri ceilings to companies controlled by Banco Filipino heir Albert Aguirre and his associates—a repeat of the tactics employed by the thrift bank during the 1980s that also got itself into trouble with the central bank.

The thrift bank strongly denies the Dosri findings, except for the loans extended to two companies controlled by relatives opposed to Albert Aguirre.

The Dosri (directors, officers, stockholders, and related interests) accommodations were unearthed after the Bangko Sentral

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

conducted a special examination within the thrift bank in October 2002. The internal audit had been undertaken as a condition for the grant of government emergency assistance to Banco Filipino.

After a year in the bureaucratic maze, the Bangko Sentral's policy-making Monetary Board in late October ordered the recalcitrant thrift bank to reduce the excess loans to within the allowed ceiling and imposed a maximum P30,000 daily fine for the duration of each violation.

Banco Filipino was given until this week to report its compliance with the Monetary Board order.

Roquito's new baby

VOLKSWAGEN has quietly brought in an initial shipment of Touareg, VW's first foray into SUV. Touareg shares the same platform as the higher-end Porsche Cayenne but not its higher-end price; Touareg goes for P4.5 million against Cayenne's P10 million.

One of the first enthusiastic local owners is Ilocos Norte Rep. Roque Ablan Jr., who chose a diplomatic-looking black model as his everyday runabout.

Heard through the grapevine

THE WIFE of Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, Betina Lopez, is puzzled why the handlers of Mike Arroyo would think she is the reason for her husband's insistence in pursuing the Jose Pidal investigation against Arroyo's brother, Iggy.

"I hardly know them," she said, adding that she is recovering from breast cancer "and would like to request for some peace and quiet."

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Malacañang urges Congress to fast-track tax amnesty bill

By Clarissa S. Batino

IN RESPONSE to a strong lobby from Chinese-Filipino groups, Malacañang has certified as urgent a bill that would provide tax amnesty to persons and companies that have understated their tax payments and, if passed, would yield about P9.4 billion in additional revenue for the government next year.

Pending before Congress is a bill proposing a tax amnesty on all unpaid tax dues up to year 2001. The Palace wants the law passed before the May presidential elections.

Based on estimates made by the Department of Finance and the National Economic and Development Authority, the government could earn an additional P2.14 billion from individuals and P7.26 billion from corporate taxpayers based on an amnesty rate of 3 percent.

The projected collection from the tax amnesty, however, is nowhere near the estimated P635 billion in potential revenues from 1998 to 2002 lost to rampant cheating of income and value-added taxes specially among corporations and professionals. The losses were based on a study made by the National Tax Research Center for the DOF.

The one-time tax gain is also lower compared to the P14 billion in estimated revenue from the adjustment in beer and tobacco excise taxes that was shelved by Congress. The tax hike would affect big beer and tobacco manufacturers.

The government assumed that only households falling under the income class of P3 million and above and understating their assets by 40 percent would avail themselves of the amnesty while 5 percent of large corporations and 10 percent of small- and medium-sized firms would also take advantage of the chance to clear their past-due accounts without penalties or criminal prosecution.

Adopting the position of the finance department, Malacañang has proposed to Congress to impose a tax amnesty rate of 10 percent based on an increase in net worth for those amending their tax declarations and 3 percent based on total net worth for those without any previous financial statement with the BIR instead of the one percent amnesty rate in the proposed bills.

Malacañang said it wanted to allay concerns that the state was favoring tax cheats.

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3	318i Executive	2002	Black Sapphire	16,500 kms	1,525,000
4	318i Limousine	2002	Titanium Silver	13,000 kms	1,590,000
5	318i Limousine	2002	Black Sapphire	7,500 kms	1,630,000
6	318i Limousine	2003	Titanium Silver	3,500 kms	1,675,000
7	318i Limousine	2003	Titanium Silver	2,500 kms	1,675,000
8	318i Limousine	2003	Orient Blue	4,500 kms	1,675,000
9	318i Limousine	2003	Titanium Silver	5,000 kms	1,675,000
10	318i Limousine	2003	Steel Gray	12,000 kms	1,650,000
11	318i Limousine	2003	Titanium Silver	9,000 kms	1,650,000
12	318i Sport	2003	Titanium Silver	8,500 kms	2,100,000
13	325i	2003	Titanium Silver	12,500 kms	2,300,000
14	325i	2003	Titanium Silver	3,500 kms	2,375,000
15	325i Sport	2003	Imola Red	4,000 kms	2,475,000
16	525i	2001	Orient Blue	6,000 kms	2,500,000
17	525i	2002	Titanium Silver	18,000 kms	2,550,000
18	525i	2002	Titanium Silver	13,000 kms	2,550,000
19	Z4	2003	Black Sapphire	5,000 kms	2,950,000
20	525i	2003	Toledo Blue	8,000 kms	3,100,000

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Relocation problem bugs Northrail project

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE the trains to be used for the Manila-Clark Rapid Railway System (Northrail) will be shipped into the country by next month, actual work on the railway line may not start until June as the relocation of informal settlers on the site has barely progressed.

Transportation Undersecretary Jose Cortes Jr. said in an interview Friday that the Department of Transportation and Communications would now have to help the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council relocate these informal dwellers just to speed up the implementation of the rail project.

He said the Chinese Export Import Bank, from which the $400-million funding for the project would come, had agreed to set aside $25 million of the total loan for the relocation of the settlers.

"But nothing will be sacrificed, in terms of the quality of the rail project, even if some of the funds for it will be allocated to relocation. There are three types of materials that we can use (for the train system), and we'll choose the most economical," he explained.

Apart from lending the required amount to fund the Northrail project, the Chinese government also donated the three sets of trains that would be used on the railway system.

These trains would be shipped into the country by next month, even though actual bidding for the project could start only after all of the informal settlers on the site had been relocated, Cortes said.

While several parties have expressed interest in participating in the project through funding and financial support, he said none has actually signified the intention to run the railway system as a whole.

"Many have expressed (their intention to participate), but only by providing loans. They don't want to go into operations. They know that our fares are too low. So we (government) come in basically as the borrower on record. The operations and maintenance of the system, we will bid that out. We don't want to run another rail system. We'll privatize its operations and maintenance," he said.

The Northrail project involves the four-stage construction of a railway line that will connect the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila through a central transport interchange at Fort Bonifacio in Taguig.

Phase one of the project will run from Caloocan City to Malolos in Bulacan, a stretch of about 32 kilometers.

The 100-km, double-track railway system had a target completion date of 2006, but Cortes said the Northrail would likely start operating three years from June 2004, pushing back the target to 2007.

$15-M MWSS bond issue OKd

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved a $15-million bond issue of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, bringing to $150 million the amount of MWSS' borrowings in the second half of the year.

A BSP official said the state-owned water firm has tapped RCBC Capital Corp. to handle the private placement of the bond issue.

The bonds will not be offered to the public and will be purchased by institutional investors. Proceeds of the bond sale will be used to pay the MWSS' maturing obligations.

Last month, the MWSS issued $30 million worth of one-year bonds in the local market also for its capital expenditures. Earlier, MWSS also secured a $105 million refinancing from Deutsche Bank.

The water firm has to settle P6 billion in debts falling due until the first quarter of 2004 that should have been paid by one of its concessionaires, Maynilad Water Services Inc.

Due to an ongoing arbitration case between MWSS and Maynilad, the state entity would have to shoulder the liabilities while the issue was not settled although the arbitration court had ordered the Lopez firm to pay the P6 billion.

Maynilad, a joint venture of the Lopez group and French firm Ondeo Philippines, had stopped paying concessions fees and had filed for an early termination of its concession agreement with the MWSS.

Recent reports said Ondeo Philippines had pulled out of the joint venture and that MWSS and Maynilad were discussing a possible compromise that would involve a debt-to-equity arrangement.

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Cross-cultural competence of OFWs

By Dr. Joyce Mondejar-Dy

(Last of two parts)

IF our OFWs have proven their comparative advantage in foreign economies, can they be the possible source of the brand of human capital that the European Union needs in strengthening its trade relationships with countries where inherited tradition and cultural differences play an active role in global trade and investment?

Based on the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency report (POEA, 2000), a measly 0.14 percent of the total 643,304 land-based OFWs in 1999 were managers and the figure continued to plunge to 0.11 percent in 2000.

The POEA (April 2003) showed a 5.4-percent increase in the number of deployed land-based OFWs in the entire Europe from 2001 (43,109) to 2002 (45,363). Significant increases in the number of OFWs were noted in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy (although it showed a decline of 7.4 percent from 21,641 in 2001 to 20,034 in 2003) and England (13,633 or 27.5 percent increase from 2002 to 2003). However, the overall percentage of OFWs to Europe is one of the lowest (12.54 percent) or 586,184 versus the total number of OFWs deployed, which is 4,675,558 (Commission on Filipino Overseas, DFA, December 2001).

As to the number of OFWs employed in managerial positions, there was a drop of 5.66 percent from 389 (2001) to 367 (2002) for administrative/management workers; 4.03 percent drop in sales supervisors/managers from 620 (2001) to 595 (2002) and a drop of 17.28 percent in managerial jobs in the catering and lodging sector from 81 (2001) to 67 (2002). However, no details in the number of OFWs deployed in managerial positions in the EU are currently within access of the researcher (December 2002, Commission on OFWs, Central Bank of the Philippines).

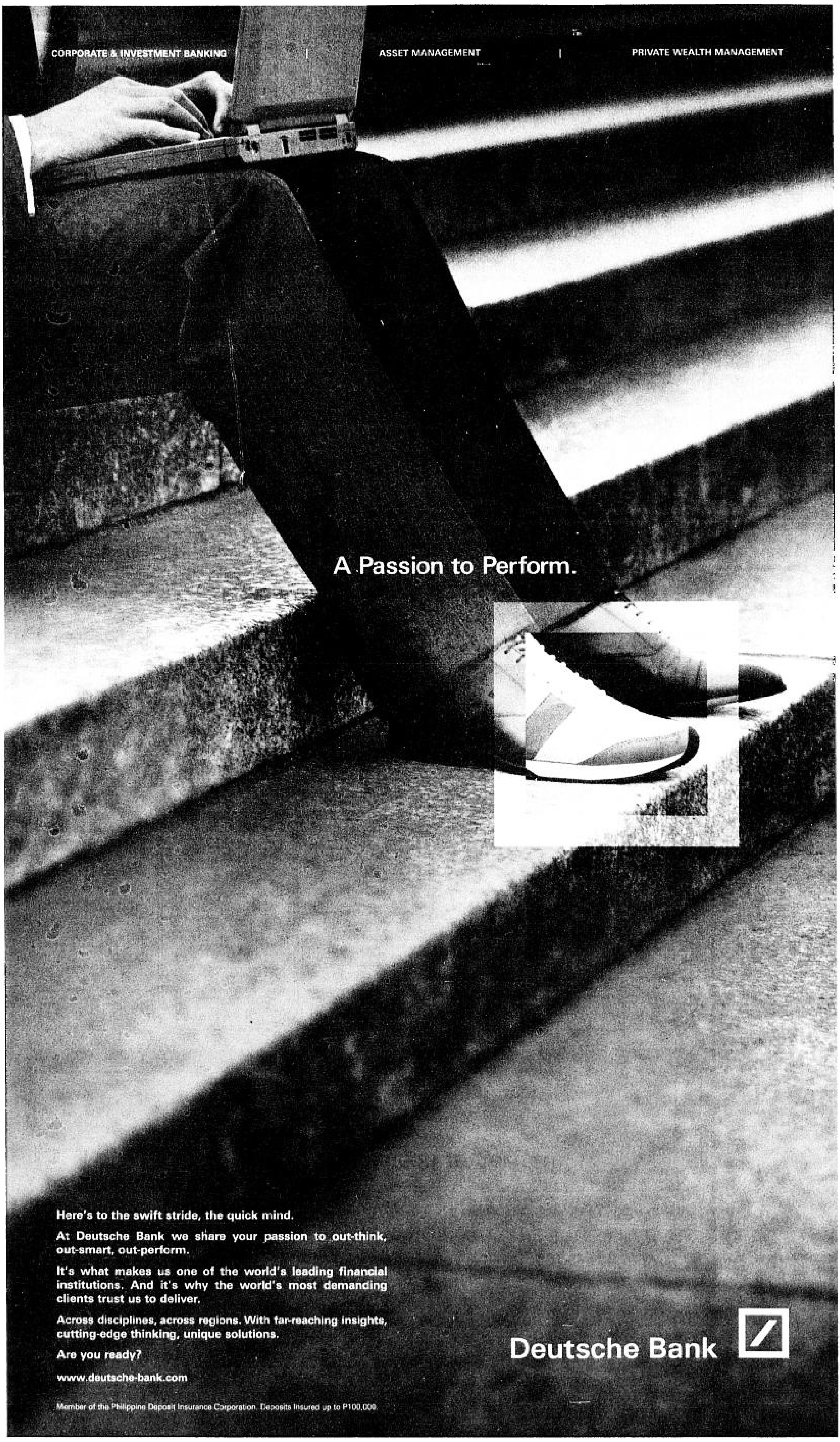
What then are the imperatives to young as well as experienced Filipino management professionals and executives who seek global careers in the EU, considering that there has been a decreasing demand for such professionals?

The following are career imperatives to Filipino management professional and executives who see themselves practicing management in the EU:

- to develop and strengthen an investigative orientation through the ethical application of research methods in addressing business issues;
- to appreciate the unique cultural idiosyncrasies of the foreign country they are in aside from fluency in the language to facilitate understanding and respect (e.g. French, German and Spanish)
- to continuously strengthen and sharpen their technical skills in various management functions;
- to master multi-cultural skills needed to customize business strategies that respect European culture as well as cultures of recipient countries (Philippines, etc);
- to develop whole-brain thinking processes and robust research methods that permit the optimal functioning of the left and right brain mental processes needed in formulating robust and relevant business strategies, and
- to work on group facilitation skills that will enhance team building skills in the context of a multicultural workplace.

The author has chosen to accept the current reality of the decreasing trend for Filipino managers and top executives and convert such information into an opportunity to develop a conceptual framework for cross-cultural career strategies in the global workplace that will lead to the publication of a career planning workbook by the end of October 2003.

(The author is the deputy program director of the Master of Science in Management in the University of Asia and the Pacific School of Management (UA&P SMN). The article is an excerpt of her paper delivered at the 2003 Leadership Workshop for HR Professionals at the Technical University of Schmalkalden in Thuringia, East Germany. It focuses on the deep, underlying factors that contribute to the global adaptability and cultural competence of OFWs).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Napocor power output in first 9 mos. up 5.5%

By Abigail L. Ho

ELECTRICITY production of state-run National Power Corp. increased by 5.5 percent in the first nine months of the year to 29,447.6 gigawatt-hours from 27,917.4 GWh in the same period last year.

The company's sales and services department said in a report that power plants owned and operated by Napocor accounted for 37.5 percent of total power output in the January-September period at 11,043.4 GWh.

Napocor power plants operated by independent power producers generated the remaining 62.5 percent, or 18,404.2 Gwh, of total electricity produced in the nine-month period.

Coal-fired power plants had the biggest share of the pie at almost 9,270.0 GWh or nearly 33 percent of the entire production mix. However, this represented a 38.9-percent decline from last year's output of 10,862.7 GWh.

Geothermal plants were the second biggest contributors, churning out a total output of 7,522.84 GWh or 26.8 percent of the entire generation mix. This, however, also reflected a slight decline from last year's output of 7,643.6 GWh, accounting for 27.4 percent of gross output in the first three quarters of 2002.

The third biggest producers were the country's hydroelectric plants, accounting for a 19.9-percent share of the mix at 5,585.9 GWh. Unlike the coal-fired and geothermal plants, hydroelectric plants actually posted an increase in generation from 4,920.0 GWh in the same period last year.

Napocor noted that natural gas plants posted the most dramatic growth in terms of share in the generation mix, surging to 12.0 percent in the January-September period from only 6.4 percent the year before. Generation almost doubled to 3,376.8 GWh from 1,795.2 GWh in 2002.

StanChart open to amicable settlement of case

By Elena R. Torrijos

UK-BASED Standard Chartered Bank, which was recently ordered by the Securities and Exchange Commission to stop alleged selling of unregistered securities, has offered an amicable settlement for the dropping of its case.

In a motion filed with the SEC on Wednesday, Stanchart said it was willing to enter into an amicable settlement without admitting any guilt or liability on its part. The foreign bank also wanted recognition that the cease-and-desist order was issued ex parte and before the SEC's compliance and enforcement department could fully hear the side of the bank.

Stanchart demanded, as a condition to the settlement, an acknowledgment from the SEC that, if at all there was a violation of the country's laws, the liability lied on the bank's erstwhile trust department head, Antonette de los Reyes, and not on the bank.

The bank maintained that the CDO was moot and academic given that the bank had already officially withdrawn from its trust clients the option of investing in Global Third Party Requested Funds, the alleged unregistered securities, as of November 1999.

Earlier, the SEC ordered Stanchart to immediately cease and desist from further offering, soliciting or selling unregistered securities to the public after the corporate watchdog's investigation concluded that the foreign bank had been engaged in the alleged illegal activity to the detriment of the investing public.

The SEC gave the bank a non-extendible period of five days from receipt of the order to show cause why the order should not be made permanent and to request that the order should be lifted instead. The SEC also directed the bank to state in its request whether it would want to settle the case.

In its motion Wednesday, the bank, which said it had received relevant additional documents only recently, requested it be given until today to file its motion to lift the CDO or to amend and supplement its existing motion that offered the amicable settlement.

US trade gap heads to 2003 record

WASHINGTON—The United States lurched towards a record trade deficit for 2003, data showed Friday, as the sliding dollar failed to plug a growing gap with partners such as China and Japan.

The US deficit in October alone expanded 1 percent from September to a five-month record of $41.77 billion, seasonally adjusted Commerce Department data showed.

The news pummeled the dollar again to a record low against the euro, which spiked to 1.2301 dollars. The euro has now gained about 17 percent on the US currency since the start of the year.

The October shortfall brought the US trade deficit for the first 10 months of the year to a staggering $409 billion, up 21.3 percent from the same period a year ago.

For the whole of 2003, the United States looked poised to shatter last year's record trade deficit of $418 billion.

The US deficit with China hit a record in October of $13.57 billion, easily beating the previous record of $12.69 billion set only in September, according to raw, unadjusted figures.

"The main culprit is imports expanding, largely because of the accelerating US economy and perhaps still an overvalued US dollar," said BMO Financial Group senior economist Sal Guatieri.

"It likely means the dollar will need to fall further to stabilize the US trade imbalance." Imports surged $2.67 billion or 2.1 percent to $129.73 billion. Exports rose $2.24 billion or 2.6 percent to $87.96 billion.

The US trade shortfall had expanded with most of the world, not just China, Guatieri said.

"Going forward it appears the US economy will outpace most other industrial regions of the world, which means we are bound to see further deterioration in the US trade balance," Guatieri said.

"That ultimately will weigh on the US dollar further."

The overall deficit in trade of goods grew 1.9 percent from September to $47.44 billion, seasonally adjusted. *AFP*

EU, G20 issue surprise call to resume global trade talks

BRASILIA—The European Union and a coalition of developing nations, which clashed recently over contentious farm subsidies, issued a surprise joint statement here on Friday calling for a speedy resumption of global trade talks.

Officials of 19 of the 20 nations of the so-called G20 coalition, including Brazil, China, India and South Africa, and EU negotiators were wrapping up a two-day summit here Friday ahead of a key World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Geneva next week.

The WTO has set a Dec. 15 deadline to relaunch global trade talks that collapsed in Cancun, Mexico, in September amid deep rifts between rich and poor nations.

One factor in the collapse of the Cancun talks was the emergence of the G20 coalition, which demanded curbs on farm subsidies in exchange for a broader agreement on free trade rules.

However, Friday's joint communique appeared to signal that the rift has been eased, and that the trade rivals are ready for a fresh round of talks.

"The dialogue proved to be fruitful and positive with both sides explaining their own positions in a business like manner and acknowledging the importance of this dialogue to achieve progress in the negotiations," the two blocs said in a joint communique.

The statement underlined "a general agreement that we need to intensify negotiations early next year" with a view to finalizing the Doha round of trade talks by a 2004 WTO deadline.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorin said the statement underlined "the preference for negotiation between the two blocs."

European Union Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, prior to the communique's release, had also struck an upbeat tone predicting that progress was now back in the offing. However, Lamy conceded tough negotiations still remain.

"We have to switch from general proclamations like we all love the negotiations ... and we have to move back to technicalities, how we structure negotiations, in market access, domestic support for agriculture, export support," he said.

The EU and the G20 stressed they should "move as quickly as possible into an increased dialogue between all partners to achieve real and substantive progress in line with the Doha mandate and the timeframe defined therein," the statement said.

"The G20 reiterated its disposition to contribute to the success of negotiations and to move into a negotiation mode early next year," the statement added.

Both blocks agreed to continue pursuing their negotiations after the Brasilia meetings through their Geneva delegations, and at a ministerial level to achieve "a successful and timely completion of the Doha round." *AFP*

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Bertelsmann, Sony merge music units

GUETERSLOH, Germany—Germany's Bertelsmann and the Japanese electronics giant Sony have signed a binding agreement to merge their recorded music divisions, Bertelsmann announced Friday.

The deal, one of the biggest in the music industry, marks another phase in the long-awaited consolidation of the sector.

It will bring Sony artists ranging from Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Celine Dion and Elvis Presley together with Bertelsmann talents such as Avril Lavigne and Britney Spears.

Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) and Sony Music will be 50-50 partners in the joint venture, which will be based in New York and called Sony BMG, it said in a statement.

Friday's news follows their announcement on Nov. 6 that they had signed a non-binding agreement on the merger.

That announcement enabled them to steal a march on Britain's EMI which had been hoping to acquire Warner Music from Time Warner.

With industry analysts suggesting regulatory authorities would permit only one big merger in the music industry, EMI subsequently withdrew its offer and Time Warner was later snapped up by Canadian tycoon Edgar Bronfman.

Consolidation is seen as a vital step for an industry struggling to come to terms with rampant piracy, especially over the Internet, and falling sales.

Sony Music, the world's number two in the sector with a 14.1 percent share of the market, and BMG, ranked number five with 11.1 percent, had been trying to negotiate a deal since September.

The agreement allows the newly-formed Sony BMG to move closer to the market leader, Universal, which alone accounts for nearly 26 percent.

Universal Music, Sony Music, Warner Music, EMI and BMG together make up 75 percent of the global music market.

The deal does not include the companies' music publishing, distribution and manufacturing arms, nor Sony's recorded music business in Japan, SMEJ.

Chair of the board at Sony BMG will be Rolf Schmidt-Holtz, currently the chair and CEO of BMG, while Andrew Lack, the chair and CEO of Sony Music Entertainment, will be new CEO. *AFP*

Coke sees earnings growth in 2004

ATLANTA—The Coca-Cola Co. is well-positioned for continued earnings growth in 2004, but must do a better job on its initiatives in some key markets around the world, including Brazil and North America, chief executive Doug Daft said Friday.

In a meeting with investors and analysts in New York, Daft said the world's largest beverage maker expects 11 percent to 12 percent earnings growth over the long-term, but is not where it wants to be as far as operating income levels and brand performance in some markets.

"In some markets, we have been too volume-only focused and our package offerings are too limited," Daft said.

Citing past strategies in Brazil and North America, Daft said "the steps are being taken now" to improve local execution.

He said the Atlanta-based company has already been able to achieve growth in Mexico, Spain and Greece.

Daft would not give quarterly earnings guidance, keeping with company policy, but he said Coke overall is poised for a strong year in 2004. He said the company will focus on profitable volume growth, aggressive cost management and leveraging an efficient capital structure.

"My message is simply that the Coca-Cola Co. and our bottling partners around the world are extremely well-positioned to capture the potential of this industry," Daft said.

Steve Heyer, Coke's president and chief operating officer, said the company has faced challenges in recent years in growing its Sprite and Fanta brands in North America, and volume growth in the region for Fanta, in particular, is not where the company wants it to be. He said Fanta's performance has been strong in Europe and Asia.

When it released third-quarter earnings in October, Coke said strong international growth offset flat demand for Coca-Cola products at home as the company reported a 12 percent increase in earnings.

The international growth, led by China and several European countries, was welcome news considering Coke only posted 1 percent unit case sales growth in North America.

Heyer reiterated Friday that international growth will be key to Coke's future.

"The way to get from here to there is with mix, and the way to get mix is to have choice," Heyer said.

Heyer said the company wants to focus on tapping into areas where it has the best chance of spreading the impact of its brand name, such as the entertainment and sports fields and national fast-food and restaurant chains. *AP*

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BSP suspends new rule on banks' buyback deals

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has deferred the implementation of a new policy on the banks' repurchase or buyback transactions to March 2004, from January.

The move was in reaction to the concerns raised by foreign custodian banks, which were worried that their clients would not be comfortable with the policy.

Foreign custodian banks have actually sought the scrapping of the policy which prohibited them from acting as caretakers of their own securities, including those issued by their subsidiaries and affiliates. The new policy is contained in recently issued BSP Circular 398.

Based on the BSP circular, all banks are required to physically deliver to an accredited custodian of the BSP the securities sold to clients either through the outright sale or a buyback deal. The restriction will prevent banks from selling the securities more than once, particularly those covered by buyback deals that banks were committed to redeem at a pre-agreed price in the future.

Bankers said the buyback deals or repos handled by the industry could amount to about P50 billion to P100 billion.

Buyback deals were blamed for a string of bank and investment house failures three years ago. Nervous clients pre-terminated their placements causing liquidity problems on the part of the banks.

The foreign custodian banks operating in the country are Citibank N.A., Standard & Chartered Bank, Deutsche Bank, HSBC and ING Barings. A custodian bank is a commercial bank or offshore banking unit appointed by the foreign investor to register his investments, hold the shares for and in his behalf and represent him in investment deals in the Philippines.

BSP Assistant Governor Nestor Espenilla said foreign custodian banks were worried that their clients might not be comfortable with the provision requiring the delivery of their securities to a BSP-accredited custodian.

"We are trying to determine if there's a need to adjust the circular to accommodate those kinds of concerns. Foreign custodian banks told us that foreign investors may not be happy with the new arrangement," said Espenilla.

The circular was designed to prevent the double-selling of securities to protect investors, the BSP official added.

Currently, buyback transactions are covered by a confirmation slip indicating the transaction. "In theory, a clever bank could resell the securities since they remain in the books," said Espenilla.

Banks found violating the order will be fined P10,000 per day on the first offense and P20,000 per day on subsequent offenses.

The BSP may also reprimand the erring bank directors or officers on first offense and suspend repeat violators. The central bank may also suspend or revoke the violators' accreditation to perform custodianship function or the authority to engage in quasi-banking function.

Circular 398 provided that securities, warehouse receipts, quedans, and other documents involved in a buyback transaction or an outright sale must be delivered to a BSP-accredited custodian bank.

If immobilized, the securities may be transferred, through book entry to the appropriate securities account of the custodian while the overlying principal borrowing instrument must be physically delivered to the buyer.

The custodian will hold the securities in the name of the selling bank but they should be segregated from the regular accounts.

Accredited custodian banks will be prohibited from acting as caretaker of its own securities or those issued by its subsidiaries and affiliates.

If the securities are sold outright, the client may choose to have the debt papers delivered to him or to an appointed caretaker.

The Monetary Board effectively legalized the repos or the deposit-taking activity when it decided to impose a 2-percent reserve on the transactions to encourage banks to declare the extent of their buyback deals.

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Tanduay study misleading, says GSMI

GINEBRA San Miguel Inc. (GSMI) recently said the study released by rival Tanduay Distillers Inc. (TDI) on the gin market "does not refute the original and primary issue of confusion among gin drinkers who mistakenly believe that TDI's Ginebra Kapitan is a product of GSMI."

GSMI counsel Gilbert Reyes of the Poblador, Bautista and Reyes law offices said this in reaction to a study done by AC Nielsen Philippines showing that consumers could actually tell the difference between Ginebra San Miguel and TDI's Ginebra Kapitan.

Reyes clarified that the issue was that most gin drinkers were misled into thinking that Ginebra Kapitan was a product of GSMI, not that gin drinkers were able to tell them apart.

Reyes said the TDI study missed the entire point. "What TDI must show is that it is clear to most of the market that Ginebra Kapitan is a TDI product and not ours."

He pointed out that "such is apparently not the case since the extensive market research done by leading consumer researcher Mercedes Abad showed that almost all of the 300 participants in the study mistakenly believed that TDI's Kapitan is a product of GSMI, San Miguel or La Tondeña."

The research also showed that most gin drinkers associate the word "Ginebra" with GSMI, San Miguel, La Tondeña and the products of these companies.

The market confusion triggered the P100-million suit filed by GSMI against TDI for trademark infringement and unfair competition.

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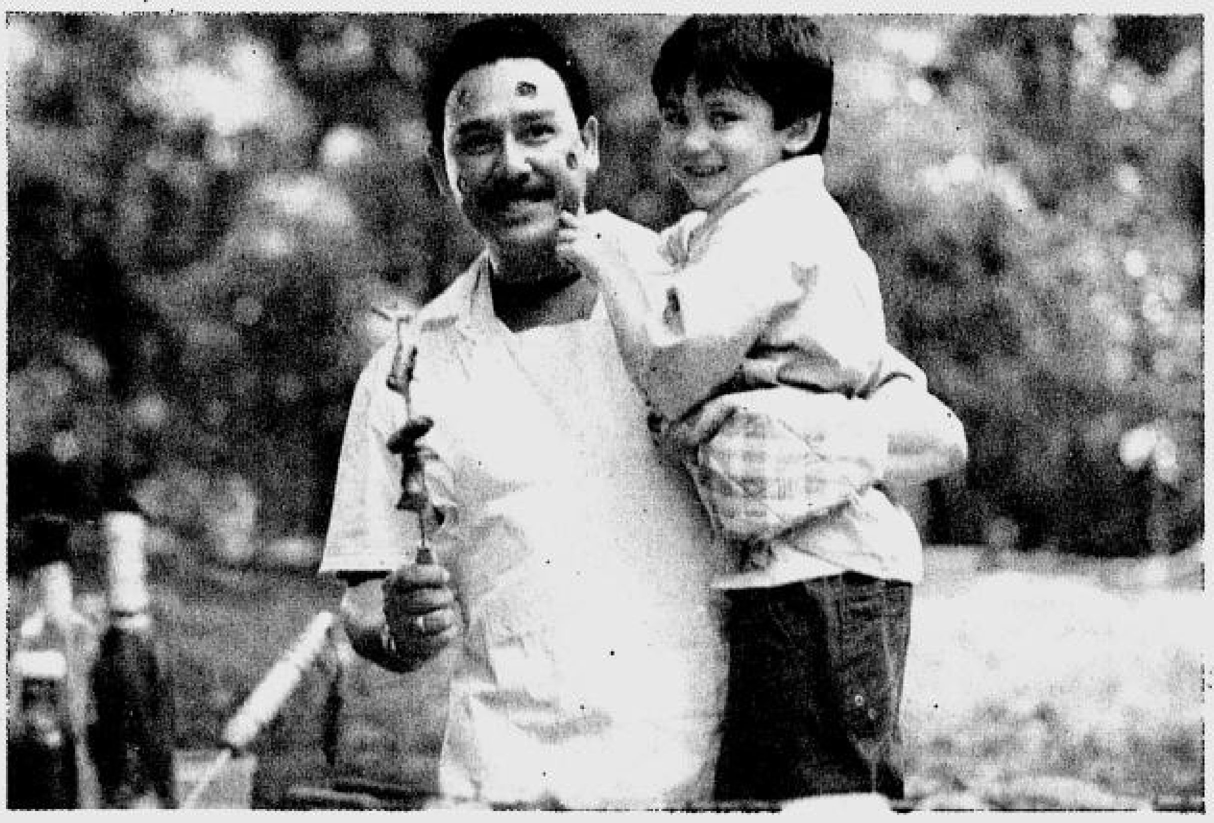

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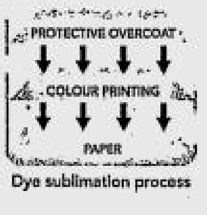

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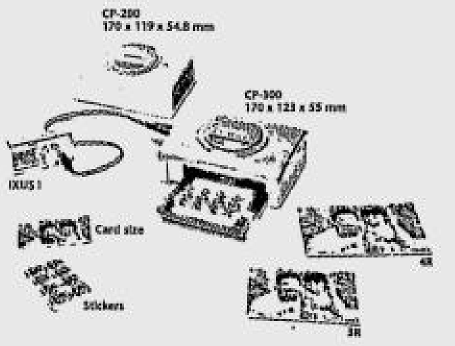

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Nationalism and insurance

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

NATIONALISM, or love of country, can be used for good or ill. We should always be on the watch. Let us take a look at the history of the fire insurance industry.

For decades before World War II and until the early 1950s, the fire insurance industry was a virtual colony of the British. An obscure outfit in London innocuously called the Fire Offices Committee (FOC) tightly controlled the price of fire insurance. The FOC was the implementing arm of the international fire insurance cartel. As in all cartels, FOC's mission was to keep the premiums high.

The price list and the rules of the cartel were inscribed in an intricate manual called "the tariff." It was the Holy Scriptures. Any deviation was called a "breach of tariff," a mortal sin that confined the offender to eternal damnation.

Then, in 1950, with nationalistic fervor sweeping the country following our independence from American rule in 1946, the fire insurance companies association cut the long-standing umbilical cord with FOC.

Rightly so, for the fire insurance business to be under foreign dominance was no longer acceptable. The nationalists in the association felt that the cartel had to be run by Filipinos who loved their country.

In the heyday of the postwar economic boom, insurance companies sprouted like mushrooms. By 1960, the cartel felt that the industry was overcrowded with some 200 companies. For love of country, the industry could not be allowed to collapse. The cartel lobbied for, and President Macapagal issued an order banning the licensing of new companies, domestic or foreign. This ban, which lasted for some 30 years, tightened the grip of the cartel.

The insurance code had been enacted long before World War II. The cartel lobbied for, and, in 1964, Marcos decreed a new code. Under the new code, the cartel qualified for and was granted a government license to operate. In all our history, the insurance cartel is the only cartel armed with a government license.

The cartel's powers were now total. It then flexed its muscles. It prescribed stiff fines, reaching hundreds of thousand of pesos per offense, for breaches of tariff. Inspection teams spread out to look into the policy files of insurance companies, general agents and brokers.

Incredibly, at the latter part of the martial law regime, the cartel even seriously discussed the need for calling on the armed forces and the police to enforce the tariff.

What started out as a noble call based on love of country, ended up in the creation of a virtual police state. The nationalist Filipino cartel was far harsher than the international cartel ever was.

Then, in 1994, the Insurance Commission made a momentous decision. In line with the free trade agreements in the Asean region, the entire insurance industry was liberalized. In the fire insurance business, the tariff was abolished and the cartel broken up by simply withdrawing its license.

The ban on new companies was lifted. Foreign companies were allowed to come in through three doors: as a wholly owned subsidiary, as a full-fledged branch or as partner in a joint venture with a domestic company.

Today, nine years later, the industry is more vibrant than ever before. The greatest change has been this: if an insurance company wants to stay in business, it has to compete for the buyer's premium payment, no longer in the stifling atmosphere of a cartel, but under the searing sunlight of a free and open market.

The consumer has benefited the most. For example, the premium for a fire insurance policy on a residential building is about one-third of what it was before trade liberalization.

And so, to the new crop of nationalists, please answer me these questions. Whose side are you on? The seller or the buyer? The supplier or the consumer?

The battle lines should be drawn, not in the classroom or the streets, but in the marketplace.

World Bank pushing for petroleum tax hike

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE WORLD Bank, like the International Monetary Fund, is urging the Philippine government to impose higher taxes on buoyant sectors, including the petroleum industry, to expand the state's revenue base and bring down the budget deficit.

World Bank country director Robert Vance Pulley said the government must pursue an adjustment in fuel excise taxes similar to the proposed indexation of beer and tobacco taxes.

"The indexation of petroleum products is something we are supporting," said Pulley.

Sources said the IMF, in its ongoing review of the country's performance, had continued pushing for an increase in fuel taxes to help address the country's fiscal problems. In the past, the Fund had also suggested the imposition of tax on phone text messaging and increasing the 10-percent value-added tax rate.

Pulley added that an adjustment in the tax structure for petroleum products, alongside the changes pushed for taxes on beer and tobacco products, would help arrest the continued deterioration of the government's revenue base.

The World Bank last week said it was seriously concerned over the Congress' decision shelving the indexation of the so-called sin products, which was estimated to give the government about P14 billion in windfall collection.

"We feel the indexation of all these three products is important. It is a major tax policy which is critical in turning around the fiscal situation of the country and allow the government relying on debt to sustain its expenditures," added Pulley.

But the government is thinking twice with respect to the fuel tax because world crude prices were high. It would be easier for the government to introduce such tax measures if prices of crude were low.

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong, however, said the executive department has yet to decide whether to push for the indexation of petroleum products.

She said a technical working group of the Development Budget Coordinating Committee was conducting a study on the benefits and disadvantages of the proposed measure.

Based on the government's initial estimates, a P1 per liter increase in the current excise tax on fuel products would yield an additional P15 billion in government revenue yearly.

The existing structure provides the following taxes on fuel products: P5.35 per liter, premium gasoline; P4.35 per liter, unleaded gasoline; P4.80 per liter, regular gasoline; P1.63 per liter, diesel; P3.67 per liter, jet fuel; 60 centavos, kerosene; 30 centavos per liter; fuel oil; P5.70 per liter, lubricants; P1.76 per liter, asphalt; P4.70 per liter, waxes; P2.53 per liter, thinners, and P1.25 per liter, processed gas.

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Leading software developer e-Campaigns.ph recently engaged political consultants WordComm Inc. for the launch of campaign management solution product C3 Locale. e-Campaigns.ph senior partner Jose Ilagan (2nd from right) and WordComm chair Archie Inlong (3rd from left) formalized the deal with e-Campaigns.ph's Lester Hurtado and Benjamin Orpilla as witnesses.

Gov't set to finalize '04 economic targets

THE DEVELOPMENT Budget Coordination Committee is set to finalize within the week the government's economic targets for 2004 in time for the meeting between the Macapagal economic team and the International Monetary Fund.

"The macroeconomic numbers will have to be finalized in the DBCC this week," said Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr.

Government officials led by BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura are scheduled to meet with the IMF during the principals' meeting this week.

Buenaventura last week said that the central bank would submit to the DBCC its more conservative set of economic numbers for 2004. The new targets will show modest growth expectations, a weaker peso, and higher interest rates considering factors such as political uncertainties, high oil prices and a possible wage hike.

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong said the DBCC would strongly consider the recommendations of the central bank.

DBCC members include the heads of finance and budget departments, and of the National Economic and Development Authority. The BSP acts as a resource group in the inter-agency group.

BSP managing director Diwa Guinigundo said the government had to thresh out the fiscal targets and determine how the estimated P197.8 billion deficit in 2004 would be financed.

Financing the deficit is an issue with the IMF because of the elections in May that could bring the government's costs of both local and foreign borrowings higher.

An IMF team is conducting a review of the Philippine economy to determine whether it could sustain the growth, price stability and fiscal discipline achieved this year.

The BSP is looking a growth in gross domestic product in 2004 that is lower than the DBCC forecast of 4.9 to 5.8 percent. GDP growth this year should hit at least 4.2 percent.

Savings from revised Casecnan deal to hit $1B

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINE government was able to negotiate a significant cut in the tax reimbursement payable to proponents of the controversial $700-million Casecnan irrigation and power project.

From $131 million, the amount to be reimbursed to California Energy International Ltd. was reduced to $87 million, according to National Irrigation Administration head Jesus Emmanuel Paras.

Paras said the agreement on the tax reimbursement formed part of the supplemental agreement with CalEnergy, which was approved and signed early last month.

The Casecnan Multi-Purpose Project, which is a build-operate-transfer power and irrigation project in Central Luzon, is one of the most expensive contracts brokered by the national government which had to be renegotiated.

With the supplemental agreement, the NIA chief said the government would be able to save $1.01 billion over the next 17 years. The savings will come from nine items, including the waiver of some fees, discounts on charges and the settlement of tax disputes.

Under the Casecnan contract, the NIA committed to pay for 801.9 million cubic meters of water a year, whether or not delivered. National Power Corp., for its part, had committed to buy 19 million kilowatt-hours of electricity a month.

The government was expected to pay CalEnergy $34.8 million a year for water delivery fee and $37.62 million a year for the contracted amount of electricity (at $0.16 per kWh).

The revisions in the Casecnan deal included the reduction in the guaranteed water supply to the NIA to 700 million cubic meters from 801.9.

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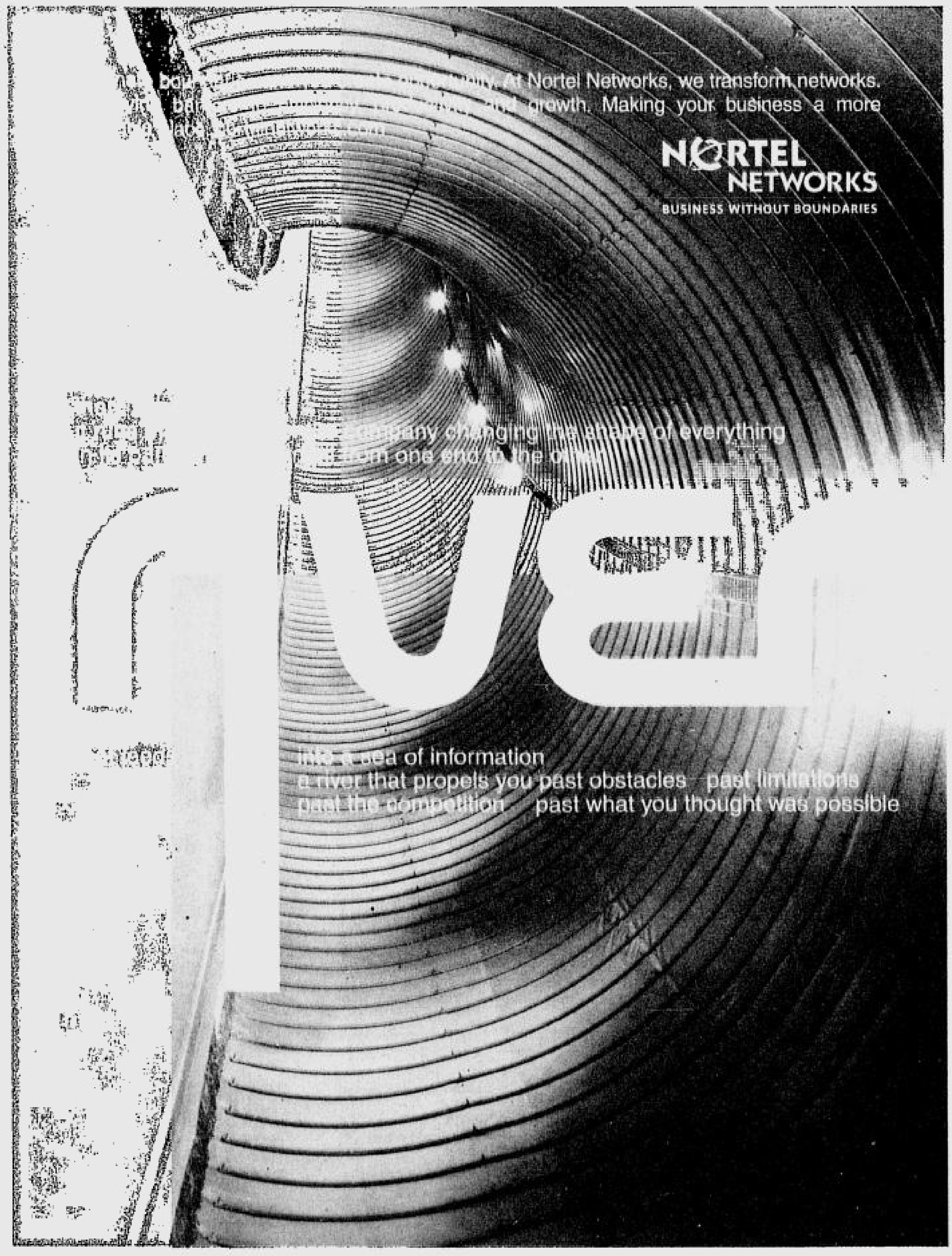
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OFC MKTG STAFF 18-50yo w/pay T-4387472 Ms Olga

OFC MKTG STAFF M/F
18-45 yrs old any course with Hi-salary 4387472 Ms. Jag

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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LEGAL NOTICE

This gives notice that the estate of the late Alicia Esperanza Cuesta Delos Santos of Poblacion, Paliian, Bulacan who died intestate on 8 March 1999 was extrajudicially settled among her heirs through an Extrajudicial Settlement of Estate acknowledged on 5 December 2003 before Notary Public for and in Makati City Rachel Angela Anosan and entered in her Notarial Register as Doc.No.92 Page No.19 Book No. 1ll Series of 2003. (PDI-Dec.15,22&29,2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

LLOYD'S FINANCING is in need of sub-agent for diff.area: Pasig/Pasay/ Cainta/Las Pinas/QC & Cavite Earn P50T or more while at home Pls. Call at 897-5644 to 46/Gemma

LLOYD'S FINANCING is in need of sub-agent for diff.area: Pasig/Pasay/ Cainta/Las Pinas/QC & Cavite Earn P50T or more while at home Pls. Call at 897-5644 to 46/Gemma

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- preferably with experience and familiarity with hospital's organization

Sterilizer Operator
– must be a Mechanical Engineer

Boiler Operator
– 3 years experience in this field is required

Driver
– must be familiar with Metro Manila roads and/or Cebu City & Cebu provinces roads

Collector
– must be able to put up security guaranty bond

Interested parties may send their resumé before end of Jan. 2004 at 1003 Antel Global, Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1600 attention to Mr. John.

Manila Water

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

MANILA WATER COMPANY, INC. invites all interested **SPECIALTY CONTRACTORS** to pre-qualify and bid for the construction of a 1200 mm Diameter Water Main crossing Pasig River, Panaderos River and Kalentong River by tunneling and jacking method.

Interested **SPECIALTY CONTRACTORS** may submit your company profile for Evaluation/pre-qualification to the following address:

The Procurement Department
MANILA WATER COMPANY
MWSS-Admin Bldg., Katipunan Road
1105 Balara, Quezon City, Philippines

Deadline of submission will be on **Dec. 30, 2003**

(Sgd.) **ARTURO A. DE GUZMAN**
Procurement Manager
Manila Water Company

(PDI - Dec. 15, 2003)

Office of the President
Republic of the Philippines
CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Clark Development Corporation (CDC) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested suppliers for the hereunder listed project:

"SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF COMPUTERS & SOFTWARE LICENSES FOR CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S LEASE-TO-OWN PROJECT"

The project includes supply, delivery and installation of 189 branded and brand new desktop computers, 10 branded and brand new laptop computers bundled with Windows XP Pro OEM and MS Office XP (SBE) OEM software licenses, including the provision of maintenance, warranties, and technical support and after-sales services for a period of three (3) years.

The bidding activity will be governed by Republic Act 9184 and its implementing rules on the eligibility checking and evaluation of bids using the non-discretionary pass/fail criteria.

Issuance of the Bidding Documents will be on December 8 to 23, 2003 (9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) at BAC Secretariat, 3rd Flr., Bldg. 2127 upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php10,000.00.

The approved budget of the contract to be bid is **Php14,466,125.00.**

Pre-bid conference will be on January 7, 2004, 2 p.m., at the OTS Conference Room, Bldg. 2125, CDC Corporate Offices, E. Quirino St., Clark Field, Pampanga.

CDC reserves the right to reject any or all applications on all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality, informality and/or defect and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government, nor does CDC guarantee that an award will be made.

Submission and opening of bids shall be on January 22, 2004, 2 p.m., at OTS Conference Room, Bldg. 2125, CDC Corporate Offices, E. Quirino St., Clark Field, Pampanga.

All inquiries and letters shall be addressed to:

The BAC Secretariat
Clark Development Corporation
3rd Floor, Bldg. 2127, E. Quirino Avenue,
Clark Field, Pampanga
Telefax: (45) 599-9000 local 542

(Sgd.) ROMEO N. DYOCO, JR.
Chairman
Bids and Award Committee

(PDI–Dec. 8 & 15, 2003

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

The Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG Fund, (Lucena Regional Office Committee on Disposition of Acquired Assets announces the sale of the following Acquired Assets (Requirement 10% Downpayment; Discounts- 10% on Cash Sale/5%thru Pag-IBIG Loan/5% on Installment Sale payable in one (1) year).

PROP#	PROPERTY LOCATION			TCT NO.	LOT AREA	FLR. AREA	SELLING PRICE
N-1	L4 B8 BATANGAS HTS., SUBD., BO. BOLBOK	BATANGAS CITY	BATANGAS	T-47402	180	766.9	405,000.00
O-5	LOT 10 BLOCK 4, BATANGAS HTS SUBD.BOLBOK	BATANGAS CITY	BATANGAS	T-46405	199		497,500.00
L-2	LOT 8 BLK 16 ROMANA AEROVILLE SUBD,TIBIG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-125637	165		99,000.00
L-4	LOT 1666-E-1, BRGY TIBIG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-124812	968.50		383,187.50
M-10	LOT 16 BLK 3 St. Joseph Village Annex, Brgy. Tibig	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-126863	167		125,250.00
M-11	LOT 1609-B-2-B-8-A Brgy. Tibig.	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-126666	447.50		179,000.00
M-13	LOT 1666-G-3, BO. TAMBO	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-127106	190		161,500.00
M-16	LOT 7 BLK 4, MACRIS SUBD., BO. TIBIG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-126067	158		142,200.00
M-17	LOT 1666-D-7, BO. TAMBO	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-126661	186		158,100.00
M-18	LOT 24 BLK 16, BO. MATAAS NA LUPA	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-126662	186		111,600.00
M-3	LOT 1609-B-2-B-8-A, BRGY. TIBIG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-125916	448		190,400.00
M-6	LOT 15 BLK 16 Romana Aeroville Subd., Brgy. Tibig	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-127103	142		85,200.00
M-7	LOT 1666-E-7 Brgy. Tambo.	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-125917	180		162,000.00
M-8	LOT 10 BLK 16 Romana Aeroville Subd., Brgy. Tibig	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-126820	152		91,200.00
N-4	LOT 3 BLK 5, SILVERIAZ SUBD., BRGY. SABANG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-130647	131		262,000.00
N-5	LOT 6 BLK 2, SILVERLAZ SUBD., BRGY. SABANG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-128017	124		248,000.00
N-7	LOT 1609-B-2-B-5-B BGY TIBIG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-128018	448.50		190,612.00
O-11	LOT 20, BLK. 4, MARCRIS SUBD. TIBIG.	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-123823	158		134,300.00
O-12	LOT 9 BLK. 3, ST JOSEPH VILL ANNEX TIBIG	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-127165	182		145,600.00
O-14	LOT 1666-F-10, BOS. BUAL & TAMBO,	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-132342	190		171,000.00
O-16	LOT 3,LORENZO II VILLAGE,BRGY. SAN SEBASTIAN	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-134589	109		228,900.00
O-17	LOT 21 BLOCK 1, SUNRISE VILL IV, BOLBOK,	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-132061	60		84,000.00
O-7	L8, LORENZO II VILLAGE, BRGY. SAN SEBASTIAN, MATAASNALUPA	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-132683	120		252,000.00
O-8	LOT 1-B, GATPOLINTAN ST,	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-131940	65		650,000.00
O-9	LOT 1666-I-3 BO TAMBO	LIPA CITY	BATANGAS	T-133758	180		162,000.00
M-21	Lot 6204-C-8 PSD-137104, BO. CALINGATAN	MATAAS NA KAHOY	BATANGAS	T-108541	276		165,600.00
N-8	LOT 8514-F-3, PSD-04-04-8989 BO. CALINGATAN	MATAAS NA KAHOY	BATANGAS	T-110031	220		143,000.00
N-95	LOT 6869-A, BRGY. III	MATAAS NA KAHOY	BATANGAS	T-112312	460		276,000.00
O-22	LOT 6233-A, CALINGATAN,	MATAAS NA KAHOY	BATANGAS	T-113147	278		111,200.00
O-23	LOT 6204-C-30, BO CALINGATAN	MATAAS NA KAHOY	BATANGAS	T-113155	182		154,700.00
K-1	LOT 855-C-53 DAMAVILLE SUBD., BAWI	PADRE GARCIA	BATANGAS	T-106012	213		127,000.00
K-3	LOT 855-C-55, DAMAVILLE SUBD.,BAWI	PADRE GARCIA	BATANGAS	T-105496	221		132,600.00
K-4	LOT 855-C-54 DAMAVILLE SUBD., BAWI	PADRE GARCIA	BATANGAS	T-106013	217		130,200.00
M-25	LOT 855-C-58, PSD-04-019402, BRGY. BAWI	PADRE GARCIA	BATANGAS	T-108166	233		139,800.00
M-26	LOT 855-C-56, PSD-04-019402, DAMAVILLE SUBD., BO. BAWI	PADRE GARCIA	BATANGAS	T-108165	225		135,000.00
J-2	LOT 18 BLK 5 BO VILLA DEL ROSARIO SUBD., BO. NAMUNGA	ROSARIO	BATANGAS	T-105497	432		280,800.00
L-10	LOT 4 BLK 8 VILLA DEL ROSARIO SUBD, BO. NAMUNGA	ROSARIO	BATANGAS	T-106230	240		156,000.00
L-11	LOT 19 BLK 5 VILLA DEL STO ROSARIO, BO. NAMUNGA	ROSARIO	BATANGAS	T-107522	428		278,200.00
M-27	LOT 8 BLK 8, VILLA DE STO. ROSARIO SUBD., BRGY. NAMUNGA	ROSARIO	BATANGAS	T-107923	240		156,000.00
M-28	LOT 4 BLK 3, MARKETVIEW SUBD., BRGY. NAMUCO	ROSARIO	BATANGAS	T-107924	160		92,000.00
L-12	LOT 18 BLK 3 SUNRISE VILL II,SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-85803	150		285,000.00
L-13	LOT 2 BLK 6 SUNRISE VILLAGE II N RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86010	140		266,000.00
L-16	LOT 27-B BLK 1 SUNRISE VILLAGE II, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86085	100		190,000.00
L-18	Lot 29 lk B4 SUNRISE VILLAGE,BO SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86701	150		285,000.00
L-19	LOT 6 BLK 4 SUNRISE VILLAGE II, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-85805	150		285,000.00
L-20	LOT 10 BLK 6 SUNRISE VILLAGE II, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86255	109		207,100.00
L-21	LOT 23 BLK 4 SUNRISE VILLAGE II, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-85804	150		285,000.00
L-24	LOT 23 BLK 1 SUNRISE VILLAGE II, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86133	120		228,000.00
L-25	LOT 22 BLK 3 SUNRISE VILLAGE II., SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-85697	150		285,000.00
M-36	LOT 39 BLK 2 SUNRISE VILL II,SN.RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86665	150		285,000.00
M-37	LOT 27 BLK 3, SUNRISE VILLAGE, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-87378	150		285,000.00
M-38	LOT 8-A BLK 5, SUNRISE VILLAGE II, BRGY. SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-86256	88		167,200.00
M-39	LOT 23 BLK 2, SUNRISE VILLAGE II, SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-87377	150		285,000.00
N-10	LOT 38 BLK 2, SUNRISE VILLAGE II, BRGY. SAN RAFAEL	STO. TOMAS	BATANGAS	T-89480	120		228,000.00
H-2	LOT 4 BLK 3 MARESCOVILLE II SUBD., SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-192578	120		108,000.00
J-20	LOT 6 BLK 8 MARESCOVILLE II SUBD.SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-196364	121		121,000.00
J-21	LOT 1BLK 8 MARESCOVILLE II SUBD.SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-196366	129		129,000.00
M-53	LOT 6 BLK 3 MARESCOVILLE II SUBD., BRGY. SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-206054	120		108,000.00
M-54	LOT 8 BLK 8, MARESCOVILLE II, SUBD.,	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-206253	121		121,000.00
M-55	LOT 2 BLK 14, MARESCOVILLE II SUBD.,	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-206234	116		104,400.00
M-93	Lot 20 BLK 7, MARESCOVILLE SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-205551	114		102,600.00
O-1	LOT 15 BLK 8,MARESCOVILLE II SUBD.,SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-216253	120		114,000.00
O-2	LOT 14, BLK 8, MARESCOVILLE II SUBD.,SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-216254	120		114,000.00
O-3	LOT4 BLK 16, MARESCOVILLE II SUBD., SABANG	PAGSANJAN	LAGUNA	T-216238	120		108,000.00
M-56	LOT 828-B-2-G-2-B-2, BRGY. PAGSAWITAN	STA CRUZ	LAGUNA	T-205552	200		600,000.00
L-47	LOT 8 BLK 3 VILLA ADELINA III,BULILAN SUR,	PILA	LAGUNA	T-198466	138		331,200.00
N-13	LOT 1-C-1, PSD-04-007929, CATAQUIZ SUBD., BO. LANDAY	SAN PEDRO	LAGUNA	T-466108	100		300,000.00
J-17	LOT 11 BLK 10 VILLA ADELINA II SUBD,NIUGAN	CABUYAO	LAGUNA	T-456769	232		406,000.00
I-39	LOT 8 BLK 25 PH2,CALAMBA HILLS SUBD., BO BARANDAL	CALAMBA	LAGUNA	T-444339	140		308,000.00
J-31	LOT 15 BLK 51, CALAMBA HILLS, BARANDAL	CALAMBA	LAGUNA	T-456873	151		317,100.00
M-48	LOT 1-A-4-E, PSD-043405-061965, CLAUDIO COMPOUND BO LAWA	CALAMBA	LAGUNA	T-466173	108	35	306,966.00
M-51	LOT 7 BLK 44, CALAMBA HILLS VILLAGE, BO. BARANDAL	CALAMBA	LAGUNA	T-466174	160		336,000.00
J-11	LOT 43 BLK 2 STO DOMINGO LAKESHORE SUBD.	BAY	LAGUNA	T-455491	163		252,650.00
J-5	LOT 46 BLK 2 STO DOMINGO LAKESHORE SUBD	BAY	LAGUNA	T-448181	163		252,650.00
L-39	LOT 56 BLK 2 STO DOMINGO LAKESHORE SUBD.,	BAY	LAGUNA	T-461046	163		252,650.00
L-41	LOT 31 BLK 4 STO DOMINGO LAKESHORE SUBD.,	BAY	LAGUNA	T-457579	163		260,800.00
M-43	LOT 51 BLK 2, BO. STO DOMINGO LAKSHORE SUBD.	BAY	LAGUNA	T-463110	163		252,650.00
M-44	LOT 40 BLK 2, STO. DOMINGO LAKESHORE SUBD.,	BAY	LAGUNA	T-466058	163		252,650.00
M-45	LOT 13 BLK 8, STO. DOMINGO LAKESHORE SUBD.	BAY	LAGUNA	T-466037	163		260,800.00
O-4	LOT 15 BLK. 3, STO. DOMINGO,	BAY	LAGUNA	T-486945	163		252,650.00
L-55	LOT 4597-F PSD-04-050687, PANGGALAAN	CALAPAN	OR MINDORO	T-105356	1133		113,300.00
O-65	LOT 4, TEACHERS VILL. LUMANGBAYAN,	CALAPAN	OR MINDORO	T-113749	341		187,550.00
10-D	LOT 2717-A-4-C-1 ,POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-81512	217		72,500.00
4-C	LOT 1 BO.CATUIRAN	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-81759	400		83,200.00
5-C	LOT 2312-A-3, BO. CATURIAN II	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-81761	401		59,900.00
G-1	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-27-B, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97396	300		52,500.00
G-13	LOT 5100-A-1-A, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97397	450		112,500.00
G-30	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-4-A, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97559	300		52,500.00
G-34	LOT 5100-A-2, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97398	666		166,500.00
G-36	LOT 20, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97544	300		67,500.00
H-13	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-4-C POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-100106	407		71,225.00
H-14	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-4-D POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-100107	300		52,500.00
H-15	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-27-C , POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-100099	300		52,500.00
H-16	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-2 POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-100109	300		52,500.00
I-45	LOT32-C, PSD-274055, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97394	350		63,000.00
I-46	LOT32-D,PSD-274055, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-97395	350		63,000.00
I-47	LOT 3144-B-19-H-2-A BGY STA ROSA	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-100100	300		60,000.00
K-10	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-24	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-103485	300		52,500.00
K-8	LOT 511-B-5-H-1, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-103488	500		62,500.00
K-9	L OT 5100-B8-5-B POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-103484	489		61,125.00
L-48	LOT 2713-B-3-E MELANIE SUBD POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-105357	273		68,250.00
L-50	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-29-F POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-105354	300		52,500.00
L-51	LOT 5100-B-5-H-2 PSD-04-050896	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-105355	356		53,400.00
L-52	LOT 5100-B-5-G POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-105362	344		51,600.00
L-53	LOT 5100-B-5-F, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-105351	350		52,500.00
O-66	LOT 2717-B-3-V-9-C-10-A, POB. BACO, ORIENTAL MDO	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-113752	600		105,000.00
O-67	LOT 5100-B-4, POBLACION	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-114280	1000		200,000.00
O-68	LOT 3144-B-19-I-1, STA ROSA,	BACO	OR MINDORO	T-113754	272		54,400.00
J-27	LOT3553-C-3-C-4-D-4 ILAG,	SAN TEODORO	OR MINDORO	T-103489	1024		184,320.00
L-57	LOT 1-A-5-F, PSD-04-051095, POBLACION I, SANTIAGO	NAUJAN	OR MINDORO	T-105348	300		180,000.00
L-58	LOT 2499-C-2-E BGY LAGARIAN	NAUJAN	OR MINDORO	T-103487	353		70,600.00
K-11	LOT 13 BLK 3 ORO VILLE,CATININGAN	SOCORRO	OR MINDORO	T-103233	300		90,000.00
K-12	LOT 12 BLK 3 OROVILLE,CATININGAN	SOCORRO	OR MINDORO	T-103234	300		90,000.00
G-49	LOT 10 BLK 3 , BO. MALIGAYA	GLORIA	OR MINDORO	T-97558	300		90,000.00
L-49	LOT 3 BLK 4 POBLACION	GLORIA	OR MINDORO	T-105358	300		90,000.00
N-16	LOT 4-B-2-G, PSD-141380, POB. MUN. OF GLORIA	GLORIA	OR MINDORO	T-109177	600		180,000.00
O-69	LOT 12 BLK. 7, POB	GLORIA	OR MINDORO	T-113751	262		104,800.00
21-D	LOT 121-V-1-A SUMAGUI	BANSUD	OR MINDORO	T-91518	455		91,000.00
L-54	LOT H-2-C-1 POLACION	BANSUD	OR MINDORO	T-105353	400		60,000.00
O-71	LOT 121-FF-9, BO SUMAGUI,	BANSUD	OR MINDORO	T-114285	498		149,400.00
23-D	LOT 727 - E - 3 - F BALIPIL,POBLACION	BONGABONG	OR MINDORO	T-91506	232		58,000.00
5-D	LOT 4 BLK 15, POBLACION I	BONGABONG	OR MINDORO	T-91519	300		90,000.00
9-D	LOT 62-C-4, BO. LABASAN	BONGABONG	OR MINDORO	T-91521	510		66,300.00
O-70	LOT 10, BLK. 3, BALIPIL,	BONGABONG	OR MINDORO	T-114280-A	300		75,000.00
O-72	LOT 1, SAN MARIANO,	ROXAS	OR MINDORO	T-114284	600		180,000.00
13	LOT 2057-A-4-C-2-B-2-C, IYAM DISTRICT	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-82692	251		147,572.00
1-B	LOT 2057-A-1-C-2-B, BO IYAM	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-82723	500		350,000.00
3	L29B16 ZABALLERO SUBD,G-GULANG	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-82694	280		196,363.00
6	LOT 3651-C-1-A, KANLURANG MAYAO	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-82691	600		480,097.00
J-45	LOT 16 BLK 22-A ZABALLERO SUBD., GULANG GULANG	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-95171	342		704,040.00
J-46	LOT 3268-D-2 GULANG-GULANG	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-95104	440		209,000.00
L-125	LOT 2245 A-6-E UNITED HOMES, SUBD, COTTA	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-96238	180		108,000.00
L-126	LOT 2245A-6-C, UNITED HOMES COTTA	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-96852	180		108,000.00
L-127	LOT 8 BLK 3 TEOFILA VILL,BEL-AIR SUBD	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-96620	143		214,500.00
L-154	LOT 10-A NETHERLANDS ST,UNIVERSITY SITE	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-97128	66	63.66	448,222.00
M-87	LOT 17 BLK 7, EXECUTIVE VILLAGE, KANLURANG MAYAO	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-93818	180		396,000.00
N-70	LOT 5 BLK 3, JADE ST., EXECUTIVE VILLAGE, BO. KAN MAYAO	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-103752	195		429,000.00
N-75	LOT 13 BLK 15, BAYABAS ST., MARKETVIEW SUBD .(with shanties)	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-100755	198		118,800.00
N-79	LOT 23 BLK 16, AFGHANISTAN ST., BETTER LIVING SUBD., IYAM	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-101519	286		457,600.00
N-83	LOT 4895-B-2-A-1-I, ST STEPHEN COMP., IYAM	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-103783	350		385,000.00
O-25	LOT 1 BLOCK 1, SOUTH EMPLOYEES VILL, BRGY.GULANG-GULANG,	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-107249	162		243,000.00
O-26	LOT 1 BLK 12, MOTORPOOL VILL, MAYAO	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-105144	138		110,400.00
O-27	LOT 2 BLK 10 HMA. FAUSTA VILL, ISABANG	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-104489	140		224,000.00
O-28	LOT 4820-A-2, SIL. MAYAO,	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-107190	1021		357,350.00
O-29	LOT 3187-A-1-C, PUROK PAG-KAKAISA BRGY. G- GULANG	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-105148	225		135,000.00
O-30	LOT 3187-A-1-A, G- GULANG	LUCENA CITY	QUEZON	T-105149	165		115,500.00
12-A	LOT 19 BLK 10-B PENHOMES, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-319122	252		428,400.00
18	LOT 5 BLK 10-B PENHOMES, BO BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-299659	253		430,100.00
7-A	LOT 15 BLK 5, INTERTOWN HOMES	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-319317	166		257,300.00
G-43	LOT 2-A BLK 8 PENINSULA HOMES, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-343193	114		193,800.00
G-51	LOT 6-B BLK 8 PENINSULA HOMES, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-343174	119		190,400.00
G-58	LOT 8-B BLK 8 PENINSULA HOMES, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-343172	120		192,000.00
K-62	LOT 20 BLK 8 PENINSULA HOMES, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-345287	282		827,188.00
L-133	LOT 1428-A-17 BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-366305	277		498,600.00
N-100	LOT 5-F, PSD-04-008021, PENINSULA HOMES, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-385190	180		306,000.00
N-111	LOT 19 BLK 5, INTERTOWN HOMES PH. 2, BO. BUKAL	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-376298	194		300,700.00
N-87	LOT 37 BLK 3, MERAMAR SUBD., BRGY. MAPAGONG	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-379710	114		171,000.00
O-32	LOT 20 BLK 1 MARGARITA HEIGHTS, PINAGBAYANAN	PAGBILAO	QUEZON	T-383593	110		60,500.00
2-F	LOT1454-A-7-A-4 MATANDANG SABANG SILANGAN.	CATANAUAN	QUEZON	T-339001	500		200,000.00
27	LOT 5 BLK 6, PENHOMES, BO BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318726	195		136,500.00
28	L7 B10,PENHOMES SUBD, BEBITO,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318724	156		93,600.00
29	L13 B14,PENHOMES SUBD BEBITO,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318727	150		120,000.00
31	L10 B16 PENHOMES SUBD,BEBITO,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318718	116		92,800.00
33	L22 B24 PENHOMES SUBD,BEBITO,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318719	150		97,500.00
J-47	LOT 15 BLK 16 PENINSULA HOMES,BO. BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-354129	120		84,000.00
K-63	LOT 01 BLK 20,PENHOMES,BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-354146	108		84,000.00
M-94	LOT 12 BLK 14, PENINSULA HOMES, BO. BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-371250	150		120,000.00
L-123	LOT 10 BLK 5 BO MOLAWIN	GUINYANGAN	QUEZON	T-388869	72		28,800.00
L-124	LOT 8 BLK 5 BO MOLAWIN	GUINYANGAN	QUEZON	T-388877	72		28,800.00
I-36	LOT 2 BLK 18 GULF VIEW SUBD,	TAGKAWAYAN	QUEZON	T-353934	215		129,000.00
O-33	LOT 23 BGY.STA CECILIA POBLACION	TAGKAWAYAN	QUEZON	T-394036	251		150,600.00
15-B	LOT 23 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322709	220		88,000.00
18-B	LOT 27 SAMPALOC,	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322793	414		165,600.00
19-B	LOT 13 , BO. SAMPALOC,	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322859	180		72,000.00
19-B1	LOT 14 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322802	165		66,000.00
21-B	LOT 21 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-3233559	180		72,000.00
21-B1	LOT 20 SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-323577	180		72,000.00
25-B	LOT 5612-E SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	I-322679	360		72,000.00
25-B1	LOT 5612-F, BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322860	180		72,000.00
26-B	L5612-I-4 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322791	180		72,000.00
26-B1	LOT 5612 - I - 5 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322792	180		72,000.00
27-B	LOT 5, BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322708	180		72,000.00
27-B1	LOT 4 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322787	180		72,000.00
27-B2	LOT 5 ,BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322798	178		72,000.00
6-B	L5612- H BO.SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322801	180		72,000.00
6-B1	LOT 5612 - I BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322800	180		72,000.00
7-B	L5612-G BO. SAMPALOC,	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322790	180		72,000.00
8-B	LOT 25 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322794	180		72,000.00
8-B1	LOT 26 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-329294	180		72,000.00
9-B	LOT 22 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-322678	180		72,000.00
G-15	LOT 8 BO.. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-343160	180		72,000.00
G-16	LOT 7 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-343164	180		72,000.00
G-17	LOT 9 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-343161	180		72,000.00
G-61	LOT 5612 - I - 6 BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-343162	160		63,000.00
G-62	LOT 5612 - I - 7, BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-343163	410		164,000.00
H-36	LOT L PSD-04-034419 BO. CONCEPCION	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-347552	398		111,440.00
M-111	LOT 18, BRGY. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-370679	180		72,000.00
M-112	L 19, BO. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-370678	180		72,000.00
N-90	LOT 17 PSD-4A-010774, BRGY. SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-375830	288		115,200.00
O-34	LOT 5612-I-2 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-373155	180		72,000.00
O-35	LOT 11, BRGY. SAMPALOC,	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-377138	180		72,000.00
O-36	L18, BO. SAMPALOC,	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-375485	205		82,000.00
O-37	LOT 15 BO. SAMPALOC,	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-384628	231		92,400.00
O-38	LOT 5612-I-3 BO SAMPALOC	SARIAYA	QUEZON	T-373154	180		72,000.00
5-A	LOT14 BLK3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-319191	200		139,802.78
7	LOT 5-A-2-B-1-1,BO. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-311088	343		240,211.06
G-21	LOT 5 BLK 4 CASANDRA VILLAGE, MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-345236	219		131,400.00
G-22	LOT 4 BLK 5 CASANDRA VILLAGE ,MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-338004	210		126,000.00
G-23	LOT 2-D-3-H BO MALABANBAN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343191	250		112,500.00
G-24	LOT 15 BLK 6 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-347553	165		107,250.00
G-25	LOT 16 BLK 6 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-347554	174		113,100.00
G-27	LOT 12 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342856	135		81,000.00
G-28	LOT 13 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342857	159		95,400.00
G-31	LOT 28 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342413	274		164,400.00
G-35	LOT 7 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343013	221		132,600.00
G-41	LOT 15 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342855	191		114,600.00
G-42	LOT 5 BLK 5 CASANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-338000	210		126,000.00
G-45	LOT 32 BLK 1, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342743	133		93,100.00
G-46	LOT 33 BLK 1, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342744	133		93,100.00
G-55	L OT A-3-F- STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343181	220		88,000.00
G-56	LOT 16 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342188	191		114,600.00
G-59	LOT 10 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343188	205		123,000.00
G-6	LOT 15 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE ,MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-345235	302		181,200.00
G-60	LOT 31 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343187	274		164,400.00
G-65	LOT 10 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-345288	313		187,800.00
G-66	LOT 29 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342414	274		164,400.00
G-67	LOT 33 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-342742	285		171,000.00
G-7	LOT 34 BLK 1 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343011	133		93,100.00
G-8	LOT 35 BLK 1 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-343012	133		93,100.00
H-24	LOT 23 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-348926	274		164,400.00
H-27	LOT 10 BLK 6 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-349303	165		107,250.00
H-28	LOT 9 BLK 6 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-349302	165		107,250.00
H-29	LOT 8 BLK 2, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-350343	120		84,000.00
I-1	LOT 24 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352329	120		78,000.00
I-11	LOT 12 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354336	120		78,000.00
I-12	LOT 11 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354335	120		78,000.00
I-13	LOT 10 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354334	120		78,000.00
I-14	LOT 14 BLK 10 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO.MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-353257	165		107,250.00
I-15	LOT 4 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354131	120		78,000.00
I-16	LOT 5 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354187	120		78,000.00
I-17	LOT 6 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILL AGE BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-353421	220		132,000.00
I-18	LOT 26 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352860	274		164,400.00
I-19	LOT 27 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352859	274		164,400.00
I-2	LOT 25 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352648	120		78,000.00
I-20	LOT 11 BLK5 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352070	199		119,400.00
I-21	LOT 3 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352254	217		130,200.00
I-22	LOT 3 BLK 5 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-352069	210		126,000.00
I-24	LOT 32 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-353256	274		164,400.00
I-25	LOT 8 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-353422	222		133,200.00
I-27	LOT 16 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354147	190		114,000.00
J-37	Lot 2-D-3-E BRGY., MALABANBAN,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	I-359099	199		89,550.00
J-39	LOT 9 BLK 7 ,MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-358660	120		78,000.00
J-40	LOT 8 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-358659	120		78,000.00
K-13	LOT 25 BLK 1,CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO.MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357207	274		164,400.00
K-17	LOT A-2—H STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-355701	220		88,000.00
K-18	LOT 21 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-359100	120		78,000.00
K-19	LOT 20 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-359102	120		78,000.00
K-20	LOT 22 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-359101	112		72,800.00
K-21	LOT 5 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360489	200		120,000.00
K-22	LOT 17, BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-356661	120		78,000.00
K-23	LOT 18 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-356690	120		78,000.00
K-24	LOT 19 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-356691	120		78,000.00
K-25	LOT 21 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-355870	179		107,400.00
K-26	LOT 14 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357067	120		78,000.00
K-27	L12, B9 MA CRISTINA VILL,CANDELARIA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357065	120		78,000.00
K-28	L13, B9 MA CRISTINA VILL,CANDELARIA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357066	120		78,000.00
K-29	LOT 15 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILL AGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-356022	120		78,000.00
K-30	LOT 30 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-356023	120		78,000.00
K-31	LOT 31 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-356024	120		78,000.00
K-32	LOT A-3-G BRGY. STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357516	220		88,000.00
K-33	L OT A-2-C STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357589	220		88,000.00
K-34	L OT A-2-B STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357588	220		88,000.00
K-36	LOT A-4-F BGY STA CATALINA, NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357141	241		96,400.00
K-37	LOT A-3-H STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357306	220		88,000.00
K-38	LOT 9 BLK 5 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354183	206		123,600.00
K-39	LOT 11 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354295	193		115,800.00
K-40	LOT 6 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357248	200		120,000.00
K-42	LOT A-3-K BRGY. STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357307	220		88,000.00
K-43	LOT 7 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-355869	200		120,000.00
K-44	LOT A-3-J BRGY. STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-359232	220		88,000.00
K-45	LOT 18 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-353219	192		115,200.00
K-46	LOT 28 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354191	161		96,600.00
K-47	LOT 29 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-354216	167		100,200.00
K-48	LOT 26 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357517	120		78,000.00
K-49	LOT 27 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357518	120		78,000.00
K-50	LOT 28 BLK 7 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357519	120		78,000.00
K-51	LOT 29 BLK 7, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357520	120		78,000.00
K-53	LOT 9 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-358319	214		128,400.00
K-54	LOT 17 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-358318	191		114,600.00
K-55	LOT 17 GALA MACALINDONG SUBD, MAHARLIKA HWAY,BUKAL	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-359231	349		101,150.00
K-56	LOT A-5—C BGY STA CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360552	220		88,000.00
K-57	LOT A-5-B BGY STA CATALINANORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360553	220		88,000.00
K-58	LOT 4 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-357254	218		130,800.00
K-59	LOT 3 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-355702	200		120,000.00
L-104	LOT 24 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364875	274		164,400.00
L-111	LOT 18 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-366572	185		111,000.00
L-112	LOT 15 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364263	223		133,800.00
L-116	LOT 29 BLK9 , MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-366575	120		78,000.00
L-118	LOT 28 BLK 9, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-366573	120		78,000.00
L-122	LOT 16 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-+365290	294		176,400.00
L-59	LOT 6-B-2-D-6,BO. MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-365286	148		59,200.00
L-60	LOT 6-B-2-D-7,BRGY. MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-365287	148		59,200.00
L-61	LOT 6-B-2-D-5, BRGY MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-365285	149		59,200.00
L-62	LOT 5 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364874	254		152,400.00
L-64	LOT 8 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364046	269		161,400.00
L-65	LOT 1 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364042	214		128,400.00
L-66	LOT 3-I-9-G-1 BRGY. MALABANBAN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364210	300		120,000.00
L-71	LOT 31 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364242	172		103,200.00
L-72	LOT 30 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364241	173		103,800.00
L-76	LOT 2 BLK 3 CASANDRA VILLAGE,BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360543	200		120,000.00
L-77	LOT 2-D-1-F ALIVIA SUBD,MALABANBAN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360544	400		160,000.00
L-78	LOT 2-D-1-E ALIVIA SUBD,MALABANBAN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364240	216		97,200.00
L-79	LOT29 BLK 1 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-366759	133		115,640.00
L-80	LOT30 BLK 1 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-366906	133		114,450.00
L-82	LOT 3-I-6-C EASTERN SPRING SUBD, MALABANBAN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-365289	296		118,400.00
L-83	LOT 12 BLK 10 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-366308	165		107,250.00
L-87	LOT 15 BLK 10 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE,BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360545	165		107,250.00
L-88	LOT 16 BLK 10 MA CRISTINA VILL, MASALUKOT CANDELA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-360546	174		113,100.00
L-89	LOT 7 BLK 5 CASANDRA VILLAGE, BO MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364983	210		126,000.00
L-90	LOT 4 BLK 3 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364043	200		120,000.00
L-91	LOT 6-B-2-D-10 BGY MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-361084	147		58,800.00
L-92	LOT 6-B-2-D-9 BGY MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-3610R3	147		58,800.00
L-93	LOT 6-B-2-D-8, BGY MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-361082	148		59,200.00
L-94	LOT 11 PSD-04-005641, GALA MACALINDONG SUBD., BUCAL	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364237	226		67,550.00
L-95	LOT 10 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364281	120		78,000.00
L-97	LOT 11 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364282	120		78,000.00
L-98	LOT 21 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO.MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364980	190		114,000.00
L-99	LOT 10 BLK 5, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-364283	201		120,600.00
M-113	L OT 2-A-1-K-7-D-4, CARMELA HOMES, BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-370681	220		165,000.00
M-59	LOT 2-A-1-K-7-B-3, CARMELA HOMES, BRGY. MASIN SUR,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T369991	220		165,000.00
M-60	LOT 20 BLK 1, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-370615	288		172,800.00
M-61	LOT 30 BLK 1, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-369990	274		164,400.00
M-62	LOT 11 BLK 2, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-370618	139		83,400.00
M-64	LOT 2-D-3-F, BRGY. MALABANBAN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372704	300		135,000.00
M-65	L OT 2-A-1-K-2-B-12, CARMELA HOMES BRGY. MASIN SUR.	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372490	155		108,500.00
M-66	LOT 16 BLK 9, MARIA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-367630	113		73,450.00
M-67	LOT 32 BLK 9 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE,BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-368153	112		72,800.00
M-68	LOT 10 BLK 3, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-365288	200		120,000.00
M-69	LOT 19 BLK 4, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-373201	190		114,000.00
M-70	LOT 2-A-1-K-B-7, CARMELA HOMES, BRGY MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-368894	130		91,000.00
M-73	L OT 1-A-3-8-7, ST. PAUL SUBD., BRGY. PAHINGA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-368895	419		167,600.00
M-74	LOT 15 BLK 3, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372767	200		120,000.00
10-B	LOT9 BLK 4 PENHOMES SUBD. BO. BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-323322	122		97,600.00
13-B	LOT 21 BLK 24 PENHOMES SUBD,BO. BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-323319	150		120,000.00
1-E	LOT 13 BLK 15 PENHOMES SUBD, BO BEBITO	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-335492	150		120,000.00
22	L1 B12,BRGY BEBITO,PENHOMES SUBD,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318729	97		67,900.00
23	LOT 3-B BLK 5 PENINSULA HOMES,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318729	150		120,000.00
26	L16 B16,PENHOMES SUBD BEBITO,	LOPEZ	QUEZON	T-318720	120		84,000.00
M-75	LOT 2—A-1-K-7-B-1, CARMELA HOMES, BRGY. MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372093	220		154,000.00
M-79	LOT 2 BLK 4, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372703	217		130,200.00
M-80	L OT 2-D-3-A, BRGY. MALABANBAN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372479	400		160,000.00
M-82	LOT 14 BLK 8, MA. CRISTINA VILLAGE, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372700	120		78,000.00
M-83	LOT 15 BLK 8, MA. CRISTINA VILLAGE, BRGY. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372701	120		78,000.00
M-84	L OT 16 BLK 8, MA. CRISTINA VILLAGE, BRGY. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372702	120		78,000.00
N-103	LOT 24 BLK 4, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-377467	188		112,800.00
N-104	LOT 23 BLK 4 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-377468	177		112,800.00

(Continued on next page)

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The Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG Fund, (Lucena Regional Office Committee on Disposition of Acquired Assets announces the sale of the following Acquired Assets (Requirement 10% Downpayment; Discounts-10% on Cash Sale/ 5% thru Pag-IBIG Loan/5% on Installment Sale payable in one (1) year).

PROP#	PROPERTY LOCATION			TCT NO.	LOT AREA	FLR. AREA	SELLING PRICE
N-105	LOT 5 PSD-045608-060590, BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375831	220		165,000.00
N-106	LOT 19 BLK 1, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375833	297		163,350.00
N-107	L OT A-3-1 STA. CATALINA NORTE	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384384	220		88,000.00
N-113	LOT 19 BLK 2, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-377100	182		109,200.00
N-17	L OT A-2-C, PSD-04-042698, PAG-ASA ST., BO. PAHINGA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-377455	225		135,000.00
N-18	L OT 2-A-1-K-7-B-9, CARMELA HOMES, BO. MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-376141	220		165,000.00
N-21	L OT 2-A-1-K-7-B-5, CARMELA HOMES, BO. MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-378709	220		165,000.00
N-22	L OT 2-A-1-K-2-B-9, CARMELA HOMES, BO. MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-378712	130		97,500.00
N-23	L OT 2-A-1-K-7-B-6, CARMELA HOMES, BO MASIN SUR	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-376234	220		165,000.00
N-24	LOT 22 BLK 1, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-376054	274		164,400.00
N-25	L OT 2-A-1-K-7-B-4, PSD-045605-060164, BO. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-377468	220		165,000.00
N-26	LOT 11 BLK 1, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BRGY. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-376233	269		161,400.00
N-27	L OT A-3-B, PSD-04-050558, BO. STA. CATALINA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375839	220		88,000.00
N-28	L OT 14, PSD-045605-060164, CARMELA HOMES, BO. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-373153	220		165,000.00
N-31	L OT 8 BLK 6, MA. CRISTINA VILLAGE BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-378710	165		107,250.00
N-32	LOT 7 BLK 6, MARIA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BRGY. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-378711	165		107,250.00
N-33	LOT 2-A-1-K-7-B-2, PSD-045605-060164, BRGY. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379838	220		165,000.00
N-34	LOT 23 PSD-045605-060164, CARMELA HOMES, BO. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372453	220		165,000.00
N-35	LOT 10, PSD-04-05605-060164, CARMELA HOMES, MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375832	220		165,000.00
N-39	Lot 14 BLK 6, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-373698	165		107,250.00
N-40	LOT 13 BLK 6,MA.CRISTINA VILLAGE.MASALAKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-372094	165		107,250.00
N-41	LOT 11 BLK 6 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE.BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379715	165		107,250.00
N-42	LOT 12 BLK 6 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379716	165		107,250.00
N-43	LOT 23 BLK 2 CASSANDRA VILLAGE BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375693	240		144,000.00
N-44	LOT 2 BLK 5, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379709	210		126,000.00
N-45	LOT 12 PSD-045605-060164, CARMELA HOMES, MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379771	220		165,000.00
N-46	L OT A-2-F, PSD-04046400, BRGY. STA. CATALINA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379837	220		88,000.00
N-47	LOT A-2-G, PSD-04-046400, BRGY. STA. CATALINA	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379836	220		88,000.00

PROP#	PROPERTY LOCATION			TCT NO.	LOT AREA	FLR. AREA	SELLING PRICE
N-48	LOT 2-A-1-K-2-B-11, PSD-045608-060590 , BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379714	130		97,500.00
N-49	LOT 16 BLK 3, CASSANDRA VILLAGE., BRGY. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375694	214		128,400.00
N-50	L OT 1-A-1-K-7-B-11, PSD-045605-060164, BRGY. MASIN,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-379717	220		165,000.00
N-53	LOT 9 BLK 4, CASSANDRA VILLAGE., BRGY. MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-376143	204		122,400.00
N-54	LOT 9 BLK 3, GALA MACALINDONG SUBD., BUKAL	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-376140	322		193,200.00
N-93	LOT 24 PSD-045608-060590, CARMELA HOMES, BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384463	220		165,000.00
N-99	LOT 7, PSD-045605-060164*BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-377137	220		165,000.00
O-39	LOT 13 BLK 1 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BO.MANGILAG	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-395148	255		153,000.00
O-40	LOT 6, CARMELA HOMES, BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-386959	220		165,000.00
O-41	LOT 2-A-1-K-7-B-10,CARMELA HOMES,BRGY. MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-386960	220		165,000.00
O-42	LOT 27 BLK 3, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-381114	120		84,000.00
O-43	LOT 25, BLK. 3, MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-381112	120		84,000.00
O-44	LOT 26 BLK 3 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE.BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-381113	120		84,000.00
O-45	LOT 6 BLK. 8, MA CRISTINA VILL, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-373685	120		84,000.00
O-46	LOT 7 BLK. 8, MA CRISTINA VILL, MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-373686	120		84,000.00
O-47	LOT 9 BRGY. MASIN,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384662	220		165,000.00
O-48	LOT 21 BLK. 1, CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BRGY. MANGILAG,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-385769	278		166,800.00
O-49	LOT 27 BLK. 4, CASSANDRA VILL, MANGILAG,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-385187	180		108,000.00
O-50	LOT 18, BGY MASIN, CARMELA HOMES	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384833	220		165,000.00
O-51	LOT 2-D-3-G MALABANBAN, CANDELARIA, QUEZON	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384663	250		112,500.00
O-52	LOT 22, CARMELA HOMES, MASIN SUR,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384830	220		165,000.00
O-53	LOT 2-A-1-K-7-B-7, CARMELA HOMES, MASIN,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384831	220		165,000.00
O-54	LOT 2-A-1-K-5-A, GALA MACALINDONG SUBD MASIN,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-384832	250		187,500.00
O-55	LOT 8 BLK 5, CASSANDRA VILL. MANGILAG,	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-385768	210		126,000.00
O-56	LOT 8,CARMELA HOMES, MASIN	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-385189	220		165,000.00
O-57	LOT 2 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE BO. MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-375689	120		78,000.00
O-58	LOT 3 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-386957	120		78,000.00
O-59	LOT 13 BLK 8 MA CRISTINA VILLAGE, BO.MASALUKOT	CANDELARIA	QUEZON	T-386958	120		78,000.00
L-137	LOT 5 BLK 8 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO.LALIG	TIAONG	QUEZON	T-364044	147		117,600.00
L-141	LOT 1-A-5-A-11 LC VILLAROSA SUBD., PH. 1, LUSACAN	TIAONG	QUEZON	T-354243	236		141,600.00
L-145	LOT 9 BLK 8 CASSANDRA VILLAGE,BO.LALIG	TIAONG	QUEZON	T-364952	182		145,600.00
O-62	LOT 4 BLK 8 CASSANDRA VILLAGE, BRGY. LALIG	TIAONG	QUEZON	T-396150	150		105,000.00

Interested buyers, brokers and developers may visit the Foreclosure and Acquired Assets Administration Division (FAAA), Pag-IBIG Fund Lucena Regional Office 2nd Flr. Lucena Grand Central Terminal,Lucena City, or you may call at Tel Nos. (042)710-35-37/710-35-38.

(Sgd.) CESAR V. ALMENDRAS
Regional Manager/Co-Chairman
Committee on Disposition of Acquired Assets

(PDI – December 15, 2003)

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Pasiklabin ang Galing ng Pilipino Ngayong Pasko

You can make the celebration of Christmas this year a unique,
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Please free to call GPM at 631.3932 or fax 633.1089 or text 0917.835.4829 or 0919.587.7949.
Look for **Bhelle** or **Williéy**.
Or call Advent, Inc at 687.2269 or fax 687.2559, look for **Louwi** or **Patrick**.

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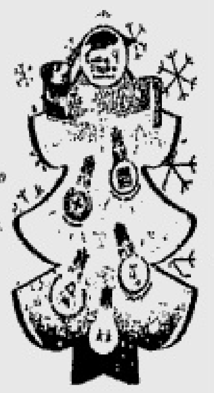

☐ **PGP Corporate Christmas Tree Donor at PhP 150,000.00/Christmas Tree**

- ○ Entitles Corporate Donor Name to be appended to one (1) Christmas tree in the *Pamaskong Galing Pilipino* display at the Luneta Park from December 16, 2003 to January 4, 2004.
- ○ Entitles Corporate Donor Name to be listed in *Pamaskong Galing Pilipino (PGP)* newspaper supplements.
- ○ Entitles Corporate Donor to nominate the specific cause to which their donations will be allocated.

Corporate Name ______
Address ______
Contact Person ______
Contact Number ______
Preferred cause ______

☐ **PGP Individual Christmas Bulb Donor at PhP 150.00/Christmas Bulb**

- ○ Entitles individual donors to choose the cause they want to support. There will be approximately 300-400 Christmas bulbs per Christmas Tree.
- ○ Individual Christmas bulb donations from the network of a Corporate donor will be hung on the respective donor-sponsored Christmas tree.

Name ______
Address ______
Contact Number ______

☐ I will donate a total of ______ bulb/s (as indicated below) x PhP 150.00 = PhP ______

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☐ Union Bank Account No. 00-001-008201-3 ☐ BPI Family Account No. 6751-0011-32 ☐ Postal Money Order

☐ I will write, e-mail, text, and invite Pilipinos, here & abroad, to join the *Pamaskong Alay sa Mundo Galing sa Pilipino* on December 16, 2003.

Please fax this form to *Galing Pilipino Movement* at 633.1089 or *Advent, Inc.* at 687.2259

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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the Family and relatives of the late

REYNALDO F. MELENDRES, SR.

who joined his Creator on December 3, 2003, sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and condoled with us in our moment of grief.

In Memory of his
FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of our beloved

Brig. Gen. Rudy Laserna Amancio (Ret.)

21 May 1945 - 15 December 2002

His parents **Jose Sr.** and **Ruth L. Amancio**; brothers and sister **Merle**; wife **Connie** and children, request his countless relatives and friends to continue to pray for the eternal repose of his soul. Masses will be offered for his intentions at the V-Luna Chapel, V-Luna Hospital, Quezon City on December 14, 2003 (8:00 AM) and December 15, 2003 (6:00 AM).

FLORENTINO "FLOY" DIAZ CARPIO II, MD, FTCM

of Paoay, Ilocos Norte

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on December 12, 2003 at the age of 71.

His loving wife **Hermila**; children **Maria (Mimie) & Noy, Cecille, Grace (Gasat), Rolenda (Lily) & Agnes (Tagibi)**; grandson **Troy William**; sisters **Estelita, Rosita & Florinda**; brother & sister-in-law, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Chapel C, Quezon City. On December 16, 2003, his body will be transferred to Paoay, Ilocos Norte.

Interment will be announced later.

So dearly missed,
so lovingly remembered

MENELIO B. SAMSON

on the day he joined our Creator on December 15, 2001

We, his loving wife, Lydia; children Meldy & Jack, grandchildren Biggs, Alodia, & Lynelle request relatives & friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.
Holy masses will be offered for his
2nd Death Anniversary.

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*"I am the resurrection and life.
He who believes in Me will live, even though
he dies; and whoever believes in Me
will never die."* **John 11:25-26**

JOHN VINCENT "BIBO" DELFIN VILLANUEVA

Director and Officer of Imus Rural Bank, Inc.

Peacefully died in the Grace of our Lord at the age of 38 on December 13, 2003.

His wife **Ma. Elena M. Villanueva**; children **Ma. Chalos Pearl** and **John Alben**; his father **Atty. Eugenio V. Villanueva, Jr.** and mother **Perla Delfin Villanueva**; siblings **Lawrence, Jesus, Catalina Susan, Hugo, Raymund** and **Susan Pearl** request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Royal Chapel of Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Road, Parañaque City.
Interment will be announced later.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS

"For God so loved the World, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."
John 3:16

CLASSIFIEDS

BENGUET CORPORATION
One Corporate Plaza
845 Arnaiz Ave., 1223 Makati City

ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of Benguet Corporation will be held on Wednesday, December 17, 2003 at 3 o'clock in the afternoon at the Sign of the Anvil, 5th Floor, Equitable-PCI Bank Tower I, Makati Avenue, cor. H.V. dela Costa Street, Makati City, Philippines.

By authority of the Board of Directors:

(Sgd.) HERMOGENE H. REAL
Corporate Secretary

(PDI – Dec. 13 & 15, 2003)

TENDER

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Comprising: -
- 12 Filling Spouts
- Induction Sealer
- Drip Pan
- VIKING Explosion Proof Rotary Pump
- Drum Decanting Equipment
- (3) Weighing Scales (to 50kg cap.)
- Assorted Laboratory Equipment

Available as one Lot
Deadline for submission of bids: 19th December 2003 - 12:00 noon
Viewing by Appointment
For more details please contact Mr. Obert Cinco - Tel: 852 2910

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GoIndustry INDUSTRIAL ASSET DISPOSAL & VALUATION

HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES INC.
Rm. 102 Jolliland Bldg., 670 Edsa, Pasay City, Philippines
Tel No.: +(63-2) 852-2910 * 11 Fax No.: +(63-2) 831-9507
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We gather your resumés and forward them to companies with employment needs.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Baguio Regional Office of the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) invites interested and qualified contractors to submit pre-qualification documents and bid for the implementation of the following projects located at Pinesville Subdivision, Barangay Fort del Pilar, Baguio City;

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET
1. Development of Commercial Area, Pinesville Subdivision	5,822,275.49
2. Development of Blocks 19-23, Pinesville Subdivision	3,260,350.83

Contract duration for the HGC-funded project is TWO HUNDRED FORTY (240) CALENDAR DAYS.

Invitation to Bid shall be limited to applicants with current classification by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Category "Medium A" specializing in subdivision land development.

Schedule of Bidding is;

Issuance of pre-qualification documents	December 22, 2003
Deadline of submission of prequalification documents	December 30, 2003
Notice of qualification for bidding	January 30, 2004
Site inspection/issuance of bid documents	February 13, 2004
Pre-bid conference	February 25, 2004
Submission and opening of bids	2:00 PM, March 19, 2004

Interested bidders may secure qualification/eligibility requirements at the Home Guaranty Corporation – Baguio Regional Office, 2/F, Insular Life Building, Abanao Road Extension, Baguio City. Contact Engr. Fernando G. Caburao through telephone numbers (074) 443-60-33, (074) 443-95-85 (facsimile), (074) 446-48-81. Only qualified bidders will be issued Bid Documents and upon payment of a non-refundable bid fee in the amount of Php10,000.00

Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184 shall govern all particulars relative to qualification/eligibility, evaluation of bids and award of contract.

THE CORPORATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WITHOUT OFFERING ANY REASON. WAIVE ANY INFORMALITY IN DEFECTS CONTAINED THEREIN AND MAKE AN AWARD TO THE BIDDER WHOSE BID IS MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CORPORATION.

(Sgd.) RAFAEL P. DELOS SANTOS
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 15 & 22, 2003)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Geothermal Generation
Bac-Man Geothermal Power Plant Complex
Palayan Bayan, Manito, Albay

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

PR# 3BAC-03-0820/ PB-03-0761 – Refilling of Hydrogen Cylinders and Carbon Dioxide Cylinders
Cost Estimate P1,344,000.00
Bidding Date December 22, 2003, 2:00 PM, BMGPPC Conference Room

PR# 3BAC-03-0705/ PB-03-0678 – Supply of spareparts including materials needed in the assembly of mechanical gas extractor gearbox and impellers type GX225/3 of Unit No. 2
Cost Estimate P7.8M
Pre-Bid Conference : December 18, 2003 / 9:00 AM
Bidding Date December 22, 2003, 2:00 PM, BMGPPC Conference Room

Interested parties are invited to pre-qualify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened in a public bidding at the BMGPPC Conference Room, Palayan, Bayan, Manito, Albay.

Accreditation forms and bidding documents can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Procurement Services, Ground Floor, Bacman Geothermal Power Plant Complex.

(Sgd.) ROLANDO E. CAWALING
Division Mgr., Admin/Finance

(PDI–Dec. 12, 13, 15 & 17, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
City State Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

November 10, 2003

PHILHEALTH CIRCULAR
No. _35_, s-2003

TO : ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : Issuance of PhilHealth Identification Number (PIN) for new enrollees of the Individually-Paying Program upon payment of initial membership contribution

Please be advised that effective immediately, all new enrollees in PhilHealth under the Individually Paying Program (IPP) shall be issued their corresponding PhilHealth Identification Number (PIN) and PhilHealth Number Card (PNC) only upon payment of their initial membership contribution in the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP).

They shall be required to register and pay their initial contributions at any PhilHealth Regional Offices (PROs), PhilHealth Service Offices (SOs), or at the PhilHealth Members Assistance Center (PMAC) located at PhilHealth Central Office.

To Register:
1. Submit two (2) copies of duly accomplished M1b (Member Data Record for Individually Paying Members (IPMs)).
2. Submit the appropriate supporting documentary requirements for declared dependent/s (if any)

For Contribution Payment:
1. Accomplish a set of the Contribution Payment Return Form for IPMs
2. Pay their initial membership contributions correspondingly:
   annually (P1,200), semi-annually (P600) or quarterly (P300).
3. For succeeding contribution payments, members may remit at any of the above-mentioned PhilHealth offices at any of PhilHealth's Accredited Collecting Banks nationwide.

Please be guided accordingly.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, M.Sc.
President & CEO

BUYING IRON ORE

Export Specifications

Physical & Chemical Content (dry basis)

Fe	above 65% min.		
SiO2	3.5%		
AL203	2%		
S	0.02%		
P	0.07%		
Moisture	Below 6%		
Physical (on natural basis)	<10 MM	:	95%
	>10 MM	:	5%

1,200,000 tons for 2004

Interested parties may call Tel. Nos. 631-9744 /3407 / 9017 or 637-2727 and look for Ms. Carmi or Mr. Sy.

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Sony Ericsson swings to symphonic music

BRING out the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) in jeans, stud the stage with stars like Janno Gibbs, Anna Fegi, Jett Pangan and Jay-R and spice up the event with a showcase of the latest Sony Ericsson color handsets. Put them together in every Filipino's favorite getaway-the shopping mall-and the result is a smashing experience of sound and sight-the "Philharmonic in Jeans: Rock 'n Roll".

Sony Ericsson's "Philharmonic in Jeans: Rock 'n Roll" mall tour recently kicked off with a gala performance held recently at the Glorietta Activity Center. Sony Ericsson's latest phones, like the clamshell-designed Z600 and Z200, the full-color gaming phone T230 and the much-awaited P900, were right in harmony with the MPO, which had discarded that usual black formals for more fun in Guess jeans and casual wear.

Sony Ericsson's support for "Philharmonic in Jeans" on its sixth year is part of its thrust in imaging, connectivity and entertainment. The musical event embodies the full sight and sound experience featured in Sony Ericsson mobile phones and accessories.

With the exception of Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony", the MPO took on classics in modern pop, good old rock and roll and Christmas tunes at the event. The repertoire ably mixed "Johnny Be Good" with "Joy to the World" and songs from Avril Lavigne, Evanescence, Billy Joel, Bon Jovi and Queen. Incredible talents such as the Akafellas, Najah, Arnee Hidalgo, 604, Montserrat Singers and Lorna Llames added to the Christmas joy the rare event brought to invited guests and mall goers.

The "Philharmonic in Jeans: Rock 'n Roll" will bring down the house once more at the Festival Mall on Dec. 19. The Sony Ericsson-sponsored event also showcases its latest handsets and accessories for visitors to experience.

GLOBE Telecom Inc head for wireless business group Ferdinand dela Cruz has a word with Sony Ericsson marketing manager Patrick Larraga.

HELLO Telecom shop owners Mr and Ms Alfred Chong.

The Wonderful Christmas Show comes to town

A UNIQUE concept in Christmas shopping is coming to town. Dubbed "The Wonderful Christmas Gift and Food Show" back-to-back with "The Great Christmas Toy Show", this most awaited event hits the metropolis from Dec. 17 to 21 at the Megatrade Hall 2 of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City.

"Just about anything you will need for the holidays can be found in this one-stop shop," says Tintin Liboro, president of Neotrade Enterprises, the show's organizer. "This festive 3-in-1 event will feature not only great finds and good bargains on gift and novelty items, food treats for giveaways and Noche Buena, it also boasts of its very own Toy Pavilion and many delightful activities for families," she adds.

Moms and kids will enjoy the various activities lined up to entertain them while they shop. There will be the "Super Yoyo Show and Clinic" by Smarty Toys Corp, arts and crafts workshops by Li'l Hands and Crayola, "Bite and Smile with Delight" from Galinco Trading, "A Complete Recipe" from White King Hotcake and Waffle Mix, and special cooking demos by culinary experts presented by Nestle Carnation and Nestle Cream.

A major highlight is the Celebrity Toy Museum, which features an exciting display of the favorite toys of your favorite celebrities. There will also be parlor games to delight the kids like the "Tickle Toes Contest" and the "Great Christmas Shootout."

Great raffle prizes await lucky shoppers, including a free trip to Hong Kong.

Some of the special gift and novelty items to be found at "The Wonderful Gift and Toy Show" include Super Yoyos from Smarty Toys, the Kris Aquino Holiday Collection from Leonardo Bags, wines and spirits from Louis McLean, toys and hobbies from CS Central, homemade cheese-spreads, pasta sauces, liquor cakes, dips and dressing from Love's Recipe, special pandan salad from Don Co & Associates, select goods from Duty Free Philippines, and delicious baked goods from Janinieve Bakeshop.

Sponsors of this event include Smarty Toys, Li'l Hands and Crayola, Enchanted Kingdom, Mrs Fields' Cookies, Swift, Sunkist, White King, C&J Party Needs, Winner's Travel & Tours, Duty Free Philippines, Seiwa Manpower Agency, Astron Communication Systems, Galinco Trading, and Pearl of the Pacific Boracay. Media partners are Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, iFM 93.9, 103.5 K Lite, 105.1 Crossover, the Philippine Daily Inquirer and Women's Journal.

ProductFILES

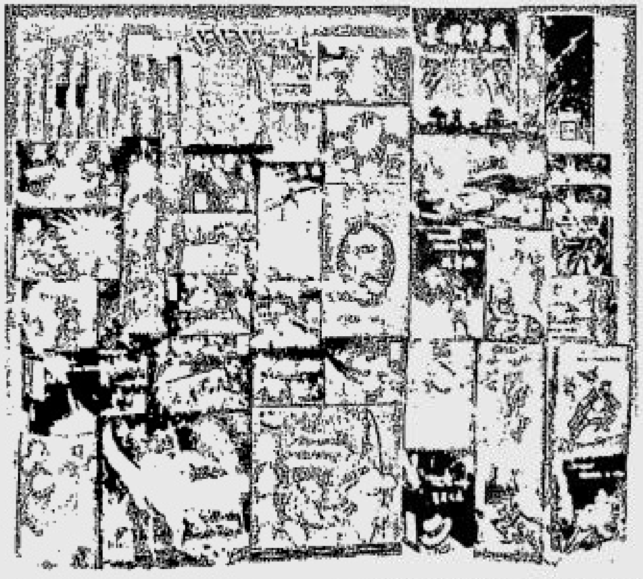
Comfort beyond undergarments

IT'S ALWAYS important to be true to yourself. Aren't you most comfortable when you don't have to hide behind masks or put up false pretenses? Hanes and Hanes Her Way make it easy for you to be comfortable in your own skin because Hanes and Hanes Her Way garments are made of soft materials that keep you comfortable. From outdoor activities to lounging indoors, every man and woman is covered with Hanes and Hanes Her Way's soft and comfortable fabrics.

Now, Hanes brings its commitment of excellence to another level with Hanes Body Spray for Men and Hanes Her Way Body Mist for Women. Hanes fragrance for men is a sheer mixture of citrus notes, that's fresh and clean. Hanes Her Way Body Mist is a light, crisp and fruity fragrance. Both fragrances conjure a relaxed, casual style that's not only reserved for Sunday afternoons at home.

Hanes Body Spray and Hanes Her Way Body Mist are available at Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines (formerly known as House of Sara Lee) and authorized Sara Lee dealers nationwide. For inquiries, call 810-5402, or e-mail customer.relations@saraleedirectselling.ph.

A shower of opportunities



NEW YEAR'S Eve is never complete without the pyrotechnics. Despite the needless injuries and accidents arising from the improper use of this festivity staple, it's still an indispensable part of any celebration. It's a good thing Filipinos, fond as they are of fireworks and firecrackers, are becoming more and more discriminating in their choice of pyrotechnics.

There are many pyrotechnic makers in the country today, but only one can guarantee a rare combination of safety and quality in every product. For more than a decade now, Dragon Fireworks Inc (DFI) has been in the business of lighting up the skies with awe-inspiring pyrotechnic effects. The first fireworks maker to be granted a license to manufacture and sell pyrotechnics in the country, Dragon Fireworks now offers the widest array of consumer fireworks-from simple Chinese firecrackers to the computer-fired aerial displays that can be choreographed to music, laser and projections.

As for safety, all products carry a warning label and a detailed instruction on usage. It also offers a unit replacement guarantee for defective products. Dragon Fireworks has production codes and can trace a defective lot.

Charles and Eugene Yap of Bergen Dax Co, one of the major DFI dealers in the Philippines, offers attractive terms to wholesalers with its cumulative incentives, special discounts on volume orders, and no minimum order offers. With Christmas and New Year just around the corner, Eugene and Charles expect wholesalers to make a tidy profit selling DFI products. For more information on Dragon Fireworks, call Bergen Dax Co at 245-4818, 244-4805, or 231-5198. Log on to www.dragonfireworks.com.

PLDT LAUNCHES CARDINAL SIN TOUCH CARD

PLDT launched the Cardinal Sin Special Edition Touch Card during the recently concluded 'Serviam Concert' in celebration of the 75th birthday of His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin. The PLDT Cardinal Sin Touch Card comes in P50 denomination and is available at all PLDT business offices and prepaid card dealers nationwide. Shown is PLDT senior vice president for retail business group Claro Carmelo P. Ramirez, standing 4th from left, turning over the special edition Touch Card to Cardinal Sin at Villa San Miguel. Looking on are, from left, Ana May Jovellanos, PLDT manager-retail promotions, Joaquin L. San Agustin, PLDT VP-retail marketing, Raul S. Alvarez, PLDT AVP-retail marketing services, and Ambassador Henrietta de Villa.

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES
16th National Convention
"SURVIVAL: Redefini... ...tions
Strategies in Tou...

SMART IN PROMAP NATIONAL CONFAB

Smart public affairs head Mon Isberto (right) receives a plaque of appreciation from Ritchie Villanueva, Production Management Association of the Philippines (Promap) treasurer during the organization's 16th National Convention held recently at the New World Hotel. With them is Emil Virtudes, Promap secretary. Isberto, guest speaker of the convention, talked about 'Going Mobile: How Wireless Services Can Improve Operations'. He delved on the impact of mobile applications and mobile commerce in increasing efficiencies and productivity for business operations. He cited services for fleet management, customer care, employee relations, procurement, and administration management as examples of business activities that can be streamlined with mobile services such as vehicle tracking, person finder, text feedback, text information, and mobile commerce applications. Promap is an organization committed to promoting industrial development and competitiveness through a better and efficient management of the production system.

Bits 'n Clips

Free movie tickets

A HOLLYWOOD treat awaits Citibank credit cardholders. Now you can catch the latest movies in state-of-the-art cinemas for free simply by shopping with your Citibank Silver or Gold Visa or MasterCard, Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa or Citibank Visa Platinum. For a single or accumulated spend of at least P6,000 over a one-month period, Citibank cardholders can redeem free movie tickets for use at Robinsons Movie World Galleria, Robinsons Place Cinema, Shangri-La Plaza Cinema or designated Ayala Center Cinemas. Single or accumulated purchase of P6,000 to P12,000 entitles you to 2 free tickets. Charges amounting to P12,001 to P18,000 get 3 tickets, while purchases worth P18,001 or more will earn 4 tickets. Promo runs until Dec. 31, and the free movie tickets can be redeemed at the Citibank 0% PayLite Win What You Buy booths. Call 995-9999 for more details.

SIP Mad Escape launched

BPI Cards recently launched its latest promo, the SIP Mad Escape, at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati. The SIP Mad Escape promo gives BPI credit cardholders the chance to win one of 3 brand-new Ford Escapes. Qualified BPI credit cardholders simply need P3,000 worth of SIP transactions to join the promo. All BPI Credit Card merchants offering SIP nationwide are part of the Mad Escape promo. Until Dec. 31, BPI credit cardholders get to enjoy items at low monthly installment terms. Selected items at selected stores are also being offered at 0-percent interest rate. The Special Installment Plan-SIP-is a feature unique only to all BPI credit cards (BPI Express Credit, BPI Classic MasterCard, BPI Gold MasterCard and Petron-BPI MasterCard). The SIP works as a separate credit line exclusively used only for installment purchases an does not use up the cardholder's regular credit line.

Diners Club's tuition plan

IT'S CHRISTMAS break and most students are off from their studies. Still, parents have to prepare for providing one of the primary needs of their children-education. Diners Club offers the perfect solution for this situation as it once again launches the Club Tuition Deferred Payment Plan. Club Tuition allows Diners Club Cardholders to pay tuition and other school-related expenses, including uniforms, books and school supplies, in monthly payments of 3 to 12 months at an affordable reduced promo rate of only 1.3-percent interest per month. Just fill out the availment forms available at the SB Cards Corp office or Security Bank branch nationwide and attach the necessary supporting documents. Diners Club cardholders enjoy a separate credit limit for DPP transactions, equivalent to 100 percent of the cardholder's credit limit. Club Tuition is valid until Dec. 29 only. Call Diners Club at 887-9188.

Coloring contest from FFI

TO MAKE each visit more pleasant and to provide planholders' children a meaningful and worthwhile distraction while their parents are busy securing their education and future, Berkley International Plans Inc (BIP) and Family First Inc (FFI) launch the Kiddie Art Kraze Coloring Contest. Conceptualized by FFI GM Robb S. Paulsen, the contest hopes to serve as a venue for children to showcase their talents within the homey and friendly atmosphere that Family First sales offices have been known for. Open to BIP/FFI planholders, the Kiddie Art Kraze has two categories: the Pre-School Category for children 3 to 6 years old and the School Age Category for children 7 to 10 years old. Top 3 monthly winners will be chosen on the 5th day of each month. Planholders may secure official entry forms from any of the branches of FFI in SM Megamall in Ortigas Center, SM Southmall in Las Pinas, SM City-North Edsa and SM Fairview, or in the corporate headquarters at the 9/F Tower 2, The Enterprise Center, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

World math competition

THE WORLD Math competition in January 2004, an annual event organized by Sakamoto Educational Systems in Singapore and Sakamoto Seminar in Japan, is now open to mathematically gifted Filipino students. It will be preceded by a Sakamoto National Math Competition to be held in various countries. In the Philippines, the sponsor of the National Math Competition is the Philippine Academic Center for Enrichment and Self-actualization (Paces)-Sakamoto Philippines. The competition is open to all elementary students trained in the Sakamoto Method, a powerful and innovative method for solving math word problems. For those interested to participate in the World Math Competition, Paces-Sakamoto Philippines is conducting Sakamoto classes. For more information, call 633-6919 or 631-3836.

The miracle of birth

CREATING life is nothing short of miraculous. But giving birth also allows parents to discover an inner strength and profound courage they never knew they had. This process of self-discovery is a miracle in itself. The latest issue of MOMS&babies celebrates the miracle of birth with stories that tell how the lives of first-time parents have changed and how their perspective on life have been altered forever. This month's issue also features the pros and cons of home schooling for your kids, 10 ways to nurture your mind and spirit, enjoying the holidays despite pregnancy blues, how to balance social life and family time, and more. Celebrity mom of the month is Charlene Gonzalez. For subscription details, call 886-0333 local 115.

Cool sounds from Pharmaton

PHARMATON is giving away the gift of sound this Christmas. Not only does Pharmaton give you a sound mind and body all year round, but it also gives you the chance to enjoy the "sounds" from a free FM autoscan radio with every purchase of a box of 30 Pharmaton capsules. Pharmaton's special Christmas offer is available throughout this December at the following outlets: Mercury Drugstores nationwide, Watsons, South Star Drug, Rose Pharmacy, Farmacia Southern, St. Joseph Drugstore and Manson Drug. Pharmaton capsules provide users with a well-balanced formulation designed to improve physical energy and mental productivity. With the expected Christmas rush and shopping, Pharmaton can help combat stress and fatigue while providing protection and increasing one's stamina-so you can do even more Christmas shopping.

INFOTECH

E-mail: pr_info_tech@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Leo Magno

SAYS NAMFREL MEMBER

'I will continue fight against Comelec'

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

AUGUSTO Lagman, a vocal official of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) will not stop exposing alleged anomalies and mistakes which he said the Commission on Elections has committed during the bidding process of a multibillion-peso modernization project.

This was despite Namfrel's recent decision to distance itself from the official who has been very critical of Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and other Comelec officials.

"I will continue on but I can now be a little more bolder," Lagman told Infotech in a telephone interview.

Earlier, Namfrel sent a letter to the Comelec saying that opinions expressed by Lagman were made in his personal capacity, and did not reflect the opinion of the organization. The letter was meant to facilitate the Comelec's approval of Namfrel's accreditation as the citizens' arm tasked to conduct a quick vote count.

The Comelec reportedly delayed accreditation of Namfrel due to Lagman's critical stance.

"Ever since I started talking about the modernization projects of the Comelec, I made it clear that I was expressing my own opinion as an information technology professional, a taxpayer, and a Filipino citizen," Lagman added.

The Namfrel official who is systems chair of the organization, has offered his resignation to Namfrel upon learning of the organization's decision.

Namfrel, however, did not accept his resignation, Lagman said.

The IT executive who has been a prominent figure in the local IT industry indicated that he understands Namfrel's decision, saying that he has no ill feelings toward the group.

"They have never stopped their volunteers from expressing their opinions. But with this recent development, I have more freedom to express my opinions," he added.

True to his word, Lagman once again challenged Abalos and the other Comelec officials to face him in a public forum, and answer questions that he has been throwing at the poll body in several television programs and letters sent to the Senate and the Supreme Court.

Lagman also criticized a recent advertising campaign by the supplier of the Comelec counting machines which indicated that they were "hack-proof."

"Yes, the concern of some people is not the external hacking. The Mega Pacific public relations team is missing the point! The vulnerability of the system (can) come from an insider," Lagman wrote Infotech via e-mail.

Lagman suggested that the source code (computer program) of all the software programs for the counting machines and the PCs, which would be used to consolidate and canvass votes, be opened to the public as they have done in other countries.

"This can help in establishing some credibility on the system," the IT executive stressed.

Mega Pacific has won the P1.3-billion contract to supply the Comelec over 700 counting machines for a nationwide rollout. Congress, however, has recommended that the poll body carry out a partial implementation of the nationwide project.

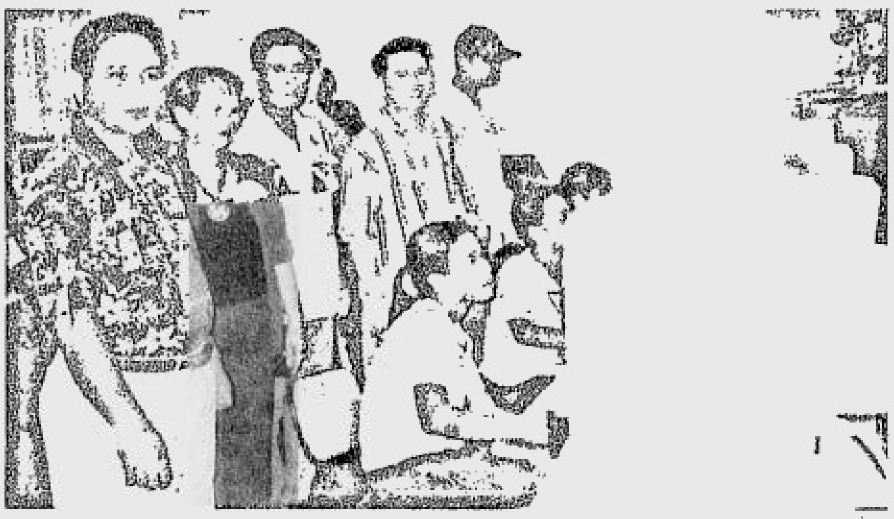
Meanwhile, Lagman also hit Mega Pacific and the Comelec for "their insistence in connecting the automated counting machines to other machines, or a network." This, he said, "makes the process doubly suspicious."

The IT executive said that existing election laws require a stand-alone system, which means it should not be connected to other machines or a network of machines either directly via communication lines, the Internet, or any other networking means.

"That's in the law and their insistence to do it is clearly a plan to violate the law. This should be non-negotiable and I urge political parties and Namfrel to put pressure on the Comelec to abandon their plan of connecting the ACMs directly, or through a PC, to their national office in Manila," Lagman added.

He claimed that Mega Pacific has supposedly defined stand-alone as a computer system that has no keyboard or mouse connected to it.

"This is at best ridiculous! A machine can have a keyboard and a mouse and still remain stand-alone. It is when the automated counting machines are connected to other machines that they lose their 'stand-alone-ness,'" he said.



STUDENTS of Pavia National High School—a beneficiary of Microsoft's Connected Learning Center program—show off their computer skills to media, local officials and Microsoft Philippine officials during a site visit.

IT changes Iloilo high school

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

PAVIA, Iloilo—Katleen Aguilar has been involved in many declamation contests at the Pavia National High School in the Iloilo province. At 15, she seems to have figured out what she wants: to study nursing and land a job abroad.

However, for the past three years, she has been making a name as Iloilo's top-notch student in a regional contest involving the creation of Microsoft Powerpoint presentations, which involved more than 26 contestants all over the province.

Her presentation, which dealt with the issue of entrepreneurship, not only demonstrated her skills in declamation but also her creativity with the help of software technology such as MS Powerpoint.

Demonstrating her skills to a group of reporters, Aguilar exuded confidence as she gave us a two-minute declamation on entrepreneurship with the aid of a computer.

Aguilar is just one of the many students at the Pavia National High School whose lives have been transformed dramatically by information technology, courtesy of Microsoft's Connected Learning Community (CLC) program.

"We won one of the grand awards in the Intel Science Fair last year. The computers and the Internet helped us a lot in our researches," Nilda Lago, principal of the Pavia National High School told reporters, as she toured them around the school's computer lab.

Pavia National High School was recently recognized as "one of the most effective schools" in Iloilo province. The school has held this title since 1994.

It was also a beneficiary of an P11-million grant from the United States Agency for International Development in 1995. This grant was later translated into the school's Learning Resource Center, which boasts of an impressive science and technology facility for the school's more than 2,000 students.

Samuel Jacoba, director for education program at Microsoft Philippines, said that the school's enrollment has noticeably increased with the establishment of the science and technology facility and recently, the computer lab.

He also noted that parents have also become more active in the parent-teachers association, as they supported various initiatives related to the improvement of their children's quality of education.

"What we really intend to do in the future is to break people's dole-out mentality, which is not exactly what we like to happen. The community should really sustain this type of projects," Jacoba added.

For years, Microsoft has been going around the country looking for potential schools that would benefit from the more than P1-million worth of computer and software grant, Internet subsidy and training of teachers.

Pavia National High School is just one of more than 20 schools that have benefited from the Redmond-based company.

Started in 1999, CLC intends to initially close the digital gap in indigent schools across the country. Recently, though, the schools that have been named beneficiaries of the program have become more than just mere computer labs that students use. They also have become information centers of communities, as some schools have gradually opened up the computer labs to outsiders, Jacoba said.

Slow market adoption of HP concept seen

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

HEWLETT Packard officials admitted that it would take some time for companies to warm up to the company's adaptive enterprise concept.

Similar to concepts shared by IBM, Sun Microsystems and other vendors, the adaptive enterprise is a company that synchronizes its information technology resources to adapt to changing business demands.

David Gee, vice president of marketing for HP adaptive management, said the strategy was about the company's ability to capitalize on change through information technology.

He said that the business environment was imposing greater pressures on many companies, and survival was now based on how companies use IT to make faster and better decisions.

Gee observed, however, that chief information officers today were focused on "keeping the lights on" than on increasing spending on innovation.

"One of our objectives is to turn CIOs into heroes and help their companies transform IT into profit centers instead of just cost centers," the executive added. "Whenever you make a business decision today, you also create multiple information technology demands. In short, business decisions trigger multiple IT events in a company."

Underneath HP's adaptive enterprise concept is a suite of solutions that enterprises can choose from. However, unlike its rivals, Gee said HP was not about to ram this concept into its customers' throats.

"We really don't go into a company and tell them what to do unlike our biggest rival," Gee said, in obvious reference to IBM.

The executive also stressed that HP will not be "all things to all people" but will focus on helping clients go through the changes in stride.

A global study cited by HP showed that about 70 to 80 percent of companies worldwide are still having second thoughts about adopting concepts such as the adaptive enterprise idea.

One solution HP is looking at is partnering with other IT companies to push the adaptive enterprise concept. One such partnership was forged by HP with German business software maker SAP AG.

The HP-SAP agreement follows a 15-year partnership between the two companies, according to Nora Denzel, senior vice president of HP adaptive enterprise.

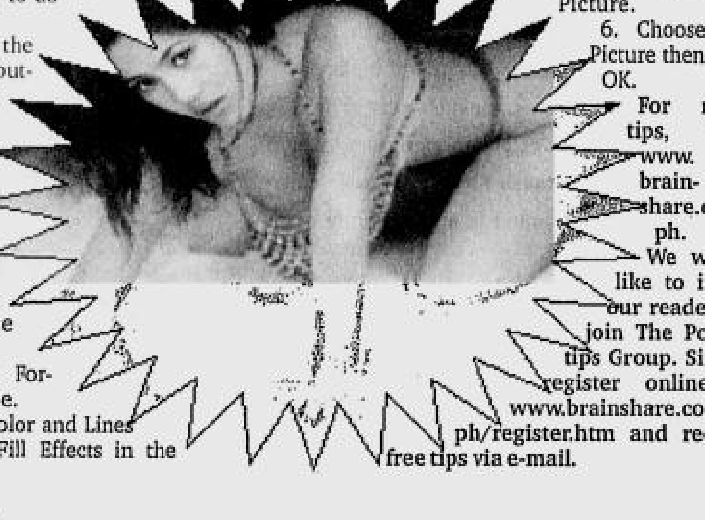
Denzel said the alliance is part of the adaptive enterprise strategy and allows both companies to merge their software and hardware portfolio, as well as business practices, to deliver solutions to customers.

SAP has more than 20,000 customers in over 120 countries. It currently has more than 60,000 business software installations worldwide.

Putting Pictures inside Powerpoint Shapes

By Jerry Liao

POWERTIPS



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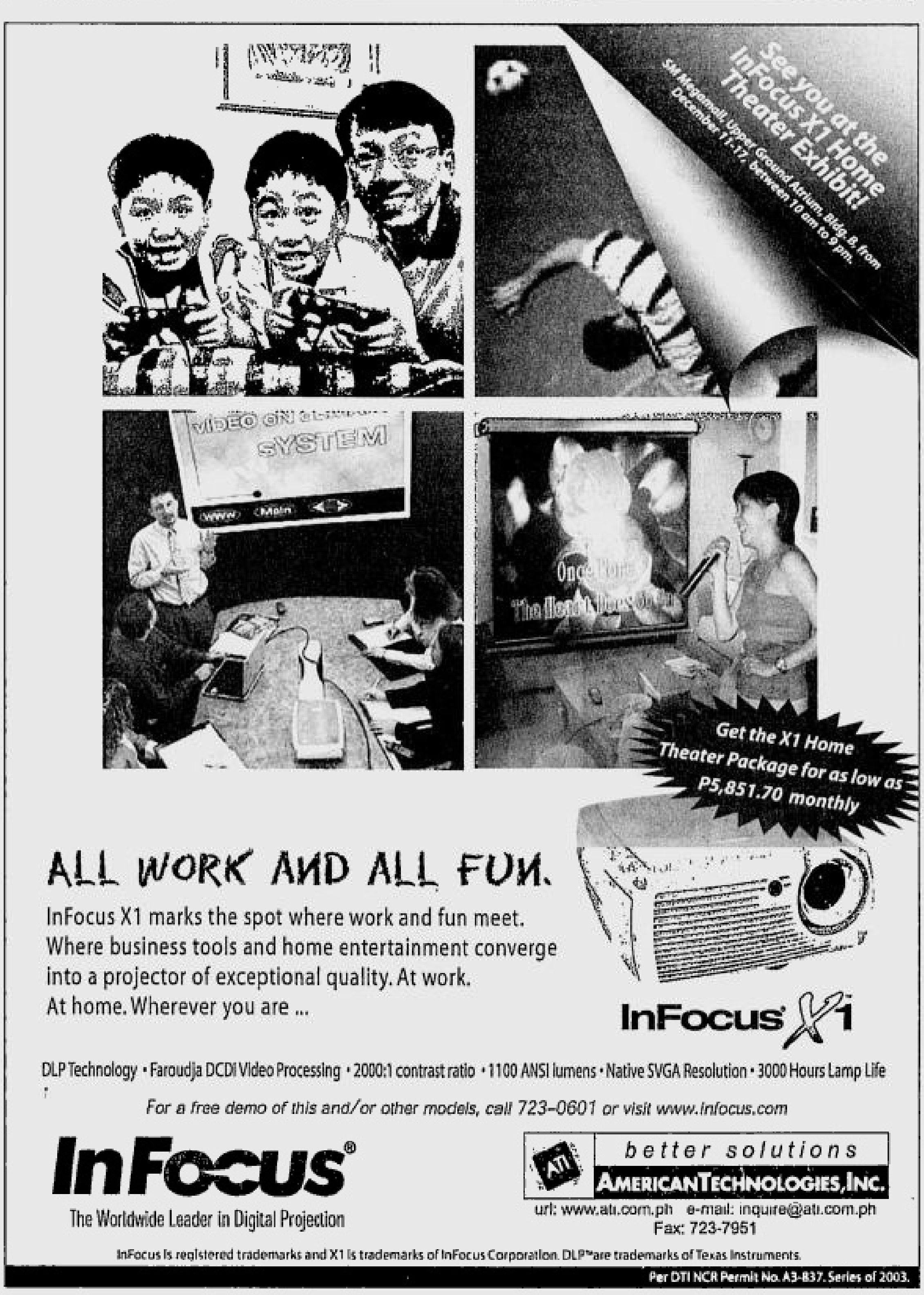

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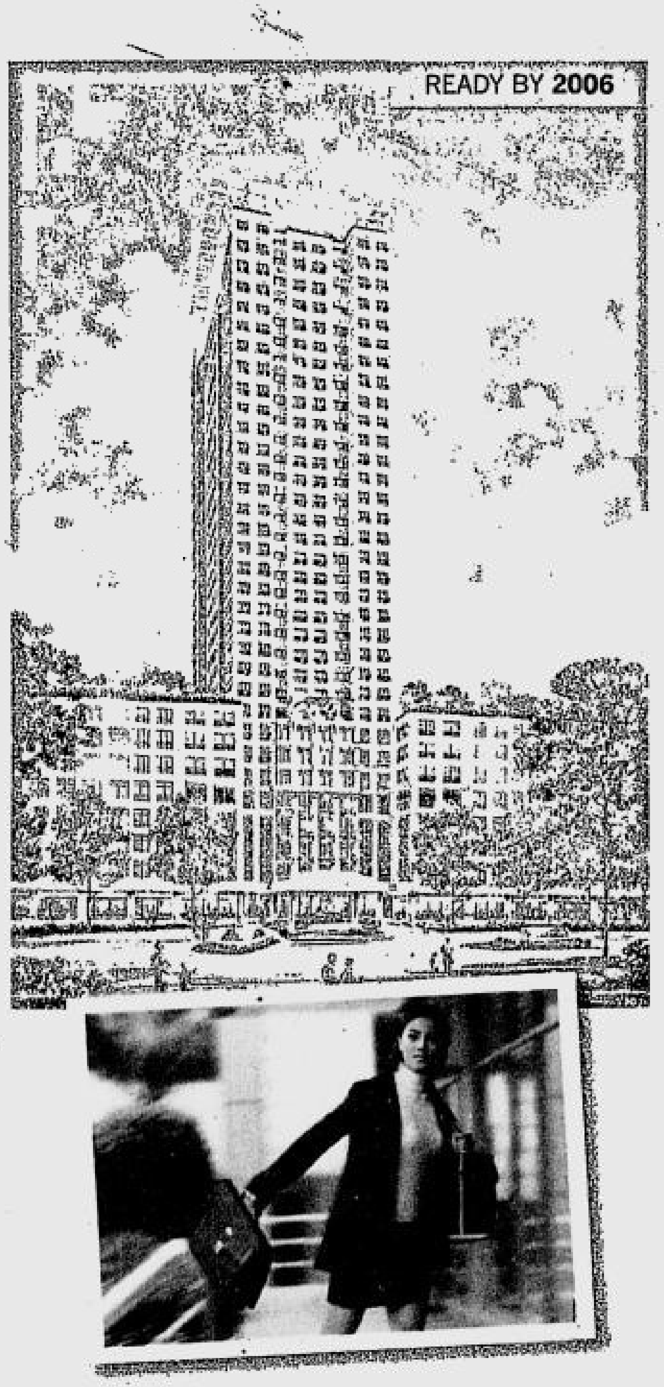

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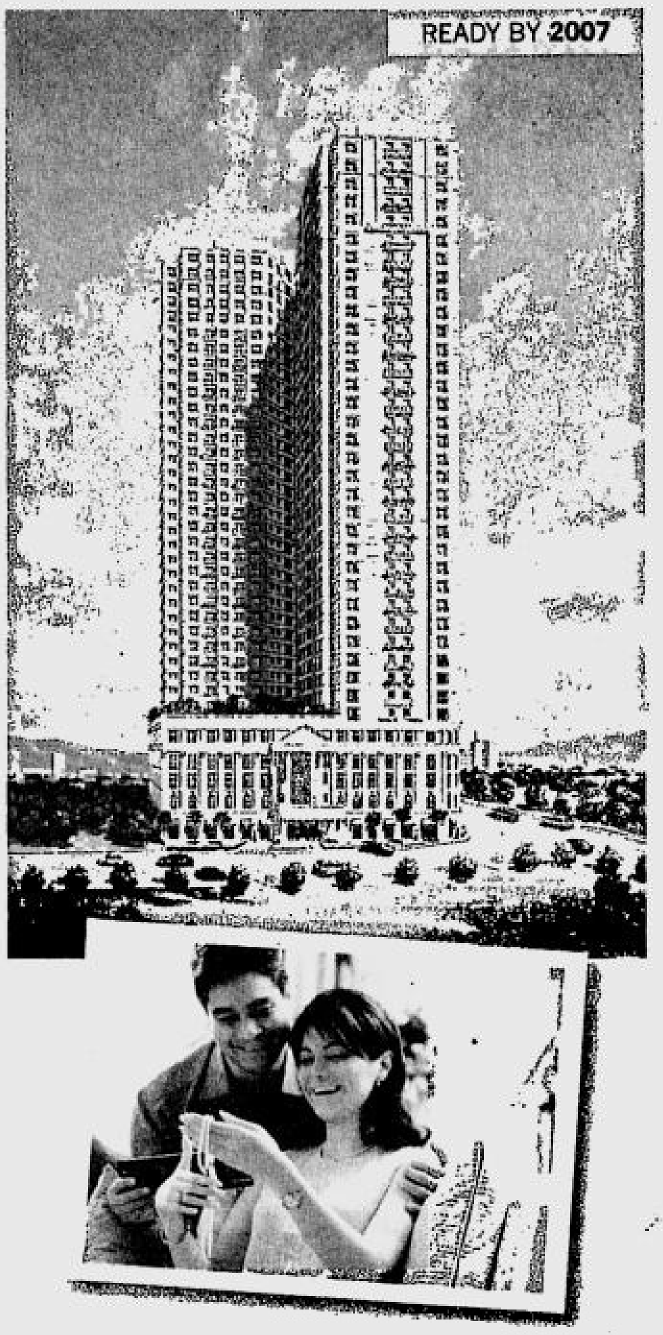

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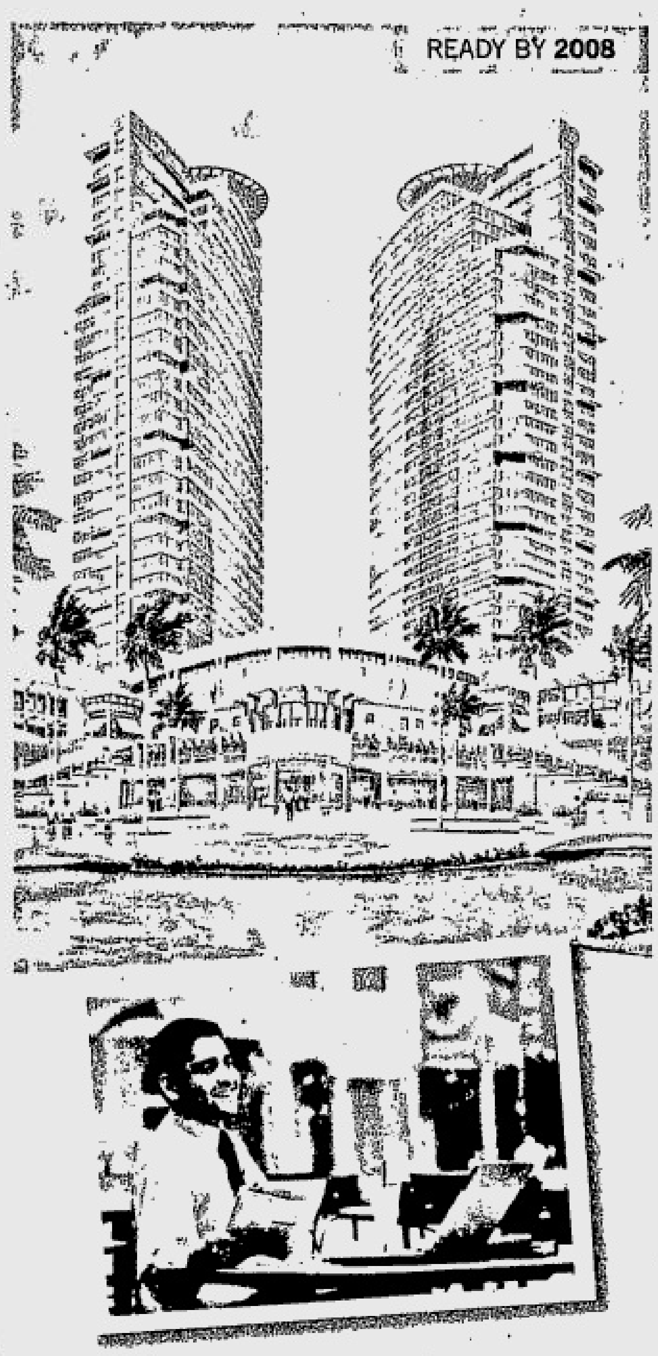

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HEADLINES MATTER

What do we make of those surveys on FPJ?

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

THE DECLARATION of Fernando Poe Jr. that he is running for president has chilled investors. His performance in the surveys is specially worrying to the business community. Previous surveys of Social Weather Stations (SWS) put the actor at number 4 in the rankings for president. Then the most recent survey in November showed him seizing the top spot.

The plot thickens. A poll taken by Pulse Asia also in November put President Macapagal-Arroyo in the lead when the field was wide open. But FPJ was only number 4.

Was there fraud?

Why the surge in the SWS ratings of Fernando Poe Jr.? And why did the SWS and Pulse Asia ratings of FPJ diverge? Presidential aspirant Raul Roco even accused SWS head Mahar Mangahas of rigging the results to favor FPJ, who happen to be his cousin.

Journalists wondered—was there hanky-panky in the reports? Actually, the reason for the discrepancy was clear to anyone who scanned the headlines in November.

The SWS poll of Nov. 8-24, 2003 found the following public rankings for president:

Fernando Poe Jr.	25 percent
Noli de Castro	24
Raul Roco	18
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	17
Panfilo Lacson	10
Undecided	6

FPJ's rating of 25 percent indicated a surge from his 14 percent in the SWS September poll. Compare this with the Pulse Asia November results. One question lay open a wide field of candidates:

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	24 percent
Noli de Castro	21
Raul Roco	20
Fernando Poe Jr.	19
Panfilo Lacson	8
Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.	2
Hilario Davide Jr.	2
Aquilino Pimentel	2

Different readings on FPJ

The survey findings were largely comparable, as they lay within the 3 percent margin of error for a sample size of 1,200.

The big exceptions were the ratings of FPJ and President Macapagal.

The INQUIRER editorial of Dec. 7 asked, "But why are the results so different? In that of Pulse Asia, Poe comes in fourth, with 19 (percent). In the SWS poll, he is first with 25 (percent)."

The difference lay in the all-important issue of timing. The SWS poll was taken between Nov. 8 to 24, while that of Pulse Asia was done earlier, from Nov. 4 to 17.

From Nov. 18 to 24, there really was a surge in media exposure for the movie star.

In the first half of November, public attention was focused on the Davide impeachment drama. Then it shifted to other political stories.

From Nov. 13 to 17, these were the front page headlines in the INQUIRER:

"Total reconciliation: President seeks peace with Estrada, Cojuangco, Marcoses.

Rampage in Ayala: Estrada supporters testing waters for possible coup.

QC judge dismisses Kuratong case vs Lacson, 33 others.

Jimenez sentenced: 2 years in jail, $1.2M in fines.

President warns of 'pattern of renewed destabilization.'

President to let Estrada go to US."

Filipinos then savored the thrilling victory of boxer Manny Pacquiao.

Wave of media coverage

The Pulse Asia poll ended on Nov. 17. The day after, the papers focused on the prospects of an FPJ candidacy. The following were the INQUIRER's front page headlines:

Nov. 18: FPJ, Ping held secret meeting 4 days ago

Nov. 19: Gloria-Noli team looms; FPJ joins selection process of opposition

Nov. 22: Kris says she'll back Ping if FPJ won't run

Nov. 23: (Internet breaking news) Guardians back Poe for President in 2004

Nov. 24: Take 2 for Da King: Nothing final yet; Cory brod said to be backing FPJ

These were headlines in the INQUIRER. One could expect more prominent space for FPJ in the tabloids. Even more so from the AM radio commentators who cater to *masa* listeners. Add to that the coverage of the big TV stations.

In short, there was a burst of media attention for FPJ from Nov. 18 to 24, building up to his declaration of candidacy on Nov. 26.

That surge in popularity was captured by SWS whose interviewers were still on field during that time. Unfortunately for Pulse Asia, its poll finished just the day before the wave of FPJ coverage.

High profile crime

Why were the SWS ratings of President Macapagal lower than those tracked by Pulse Asia? Timing again. From Nov. 18 to 24, she took a beating from big setbacks in peace and order. Here were some INQUIRER front page headlines:

Nov. 19. Kidnapped Coca-Cola executive found dead. Betty Sy: UP summa cum laude graduate.

Nov. 20. (Angelo) Reyes dared to prove his competence.

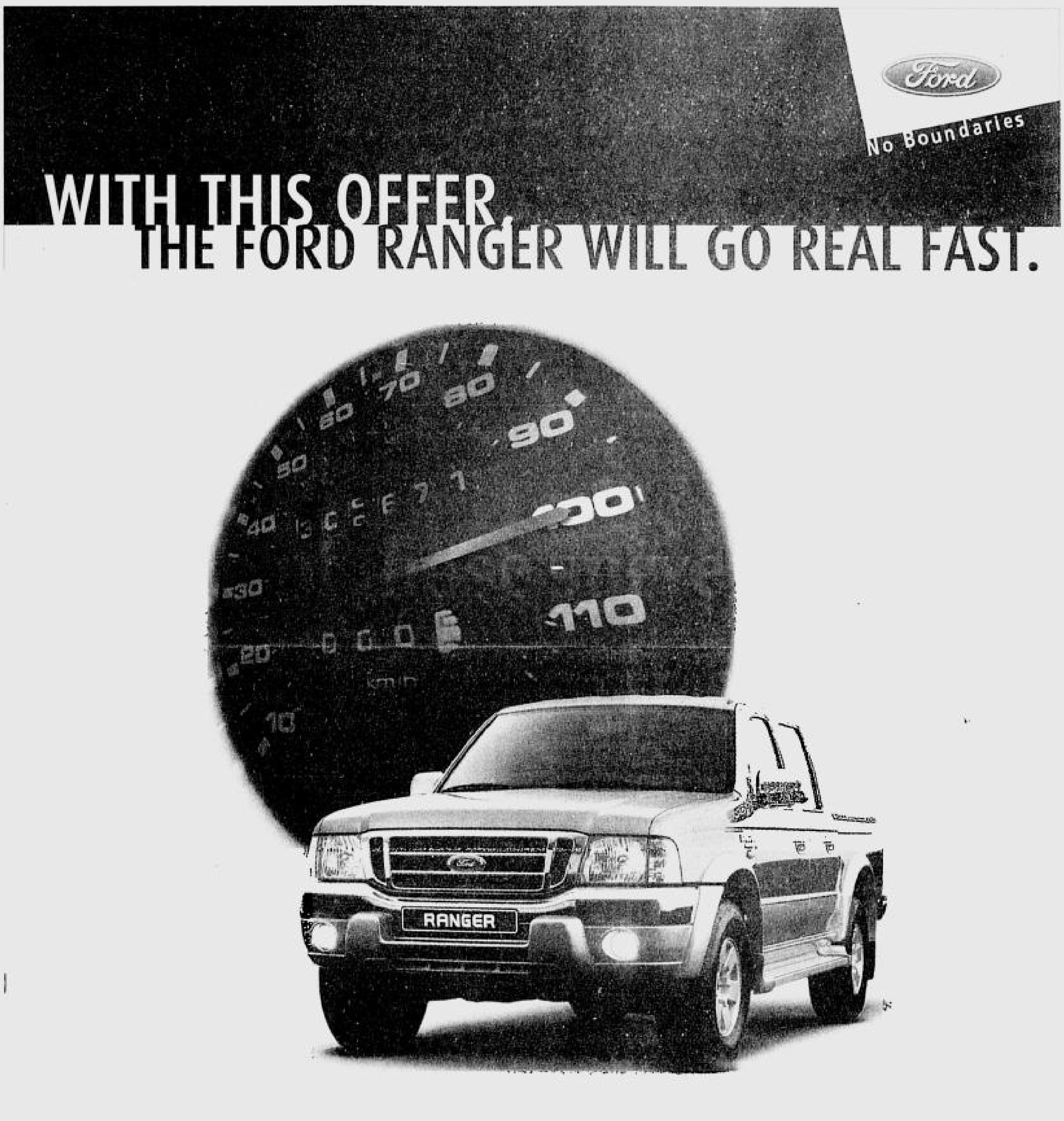
Nov. 22. It's war! Chinoy girl snatched; driver, nanny shot. Massive protest for Sy funeral Sunday.

Nov. 24. Mourners demand death penalty. 4 killed, 11 injured in Laguna provincial jail riot.

These events figured in Ms Macapagal's ratings as articulated by the SWS respondents during that week. Headlines mattered.

All told, both the SWS and Pulse Asia polls correctly read the public mood of the moment on FPJ.

Comments to <darroyo@philonline.com>



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In search of a good national leader

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Edward L. Fereira

(First of two parts)

WHAT will make this country great? It is the people who stand by it. This means—ALL OF US!

Amid the negative and adverse political and economic developments that have happened in the past few months, starting with the escape of Al-Ghozi, the mutiny of young officers in Oakwood, the hunt for Senator Gringo Honasan, the suspension of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor, the exposé of Senator Ping Lacson on the First Gentleman, the worsening problems on kidnapping, and now the resignation of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, there's a growing perception among our people that "the country is fast sinking!" What is worse is that the international community is picking it up.

It is NOW my friends, that we are needed by our country. We are all called upon by our heritage to take control of our destiny and participate in uplifting the lives of each and every Filipino. The question is, how committed are we, to this task?

Four months ago, some concerned and non-aligned members of the Management Association of the Philippines got together and shared their feelings and sentiments about the growing political, social and economic instabilities and vulnerabilities.

The group was so worried that the presidentiables may lack the good attributes of a CEO that will enable them to solve the problems of the country and arrest the growing hopelessness and frustrations of Philippine society.

Under my leadership, the Management Association of the Philippines organized and led the initial multi-association brainstorming session of all the presidents, selected members of various organizations.

The brainstorming session resulted in the adoption of a project that would define the attributes and qualities of an excellent CEO for the country and for the citizens to recognize their responsibilities to the people, in particular, and to the nation, in general.

Jesus Estanislao, the country's leading advocate in Public and Corporate Governance and Responsible Citizenship, was invited to provide the guidance and additional intellectual power in the crafting of the vision, mission and goal of this national movement.

Our group has since then grown to include more than almost 70 business and professional associations and still growing. What became clear was that the feeling of frustration is shared by many in the business and professional community.

What was even clearer was the willingness of these associations and their memberships to do "something" about the situation with a great sense of urgency!

With the forthcoming national elections, the war between the incumbent administration and the opposition is expected to get so heated up. I will make my bet that both camps will throw everything, including every available kitchen sink, at each other. Other people may think it is amusing, even comical, but the country's situation today is nothing less than unstable.

We are now approaching dangerous levels. All the political "mud wrestling" is painfully hurting the country. I am not only talking about the usual problems like "low investor confidence," continuing fall of the Philippine peso, weakening peace and order condition, ballooning budget deficit, etc. These are just symptoms. But, the real disease that I am talking about is the "too much politicking" in our society!

We have, as a people, become experts at shooting ourselves in the foot, thereby scaring potential foreign and local investors. What disturbs people, especially us as businessmen and professionals and as stakeholders to this economy, is again the recent news report stating that there will be chaos in the May 2004 national elections.

What good will this news report do for the country? Would it solve our problems as citizens and as a nation? Will it bring back investors' confidence?

I personally doubt it very much. As a matter of fact, it will even make matters worse for our economy. Unless the situation is reversed, my friends, we can expect poverty to increase, graft and corruption will remain unabated, and we will not realize our goal of becoming a Strong Republic.

The Chinese have taught as well. Their ideogram for the word CRISIS is WEI JI which means Danger or Opportunity. And when there is restlessness in the minds and hearts of the people, the tension and skepticism run higher and the attacks to our leaders' integrity became more vicious than ever before. This is obviously breaking the sanctity of our country. The political division in this country is one of the worst we have ever seen in many years.

Yes, they can go on with their politicking, bickering, mudslinging and investigations, provided that the national leadership could ensure our people that we are going to have honest, orderly and peaceful national elections next year. We can see no reasons to put this aside just because the country has problems.

In fact, the elections will be a step toward a solution: a change in national leadership through elections and not through extraordinary means.

Hopefully, we will have a good set of qualified candidates if there are still such leaders around. I firmly believe there are! Our leaders are not born. It is the people that help them grow to become leaders.

This is one of the biggest challenges that the PHILMO...GO!GO! will face and achieve in these coming six months.

While I will still touch on Leadership and Good Governance, I will do so from the perspective of a group of professionals who are hurting and hurting deeply because of what is happening to our country.

I will therefore try to paint a picture of what we see in the business and professional community—and it is not a nice picture—and then share with you what we believe are some of the actions that many of us can do to ensure that we survive beyond May 2004.

In the last four months, we have seen the country struggle through one crisis after another. Let me enumerate some of the major ones:

1. The unsuccessful power grab at Oakwood,
2. The deterioration of the Senate into a circus with the Jose Pidal comedy,
3. The breakaway of two top national leaders (Vice President Guingona and Senate Majority Floor Leader Legarda) from the ruling party, Lakas
4. The presidential turnabout on a political decision not to run,
5. The disengagement of three political parties (Aksyon Demokratiko, Reporma and Promdi) from the ruling People Power Coalition,
6. The possibility of a presidential candidate landing in jail for a crime committed in the past and the recent announcement of the candidacy of still another presidential candidate of questionable eligibility and qualifications,
7. The incredible railroading of an unconstitutional impeachment rap against one of the country's most respected civil servants, led by a party (NPC) which is part of the coalition with the administration party.
8. The separation, voluntary or otherwise, of key members of the official family led by Secretaries de Villa, Camacho, Reyes and Gen. Corpus, among others.
9. The frenetic and frenzied search for a popular vice-presidential candidate to shore up the deteriorating popularity and to improve the reelectability of the country's Chief Executive,
10. The now-apparent irregularities in the Comelec election computerization project that threaten the credibility of the counting and canvassing of votes in the May 2004 elections.

A nation in crisis

In the last four months, the country has been reeling in a period of constant flux, going from one crisis to another, resulting in further erosion of confidence and growing hopelessness of a people nearing despair.

The recent launching of the MAP/PMAP/ISA-led Philippine Movement for Good Governance in Makati and Cebu, which were meant to start the process of lighting candles of hope from Aparri to Jolo, seems like a feeble effort against the rampaging forces of evil and destruction in our country.

The ship of state is drifting and is headed for a giant whirlpool that can swallow this struggling republic. The ruling elite in government and business seem to have lost control of the rudders. No thanks to the raw, selfish and obsessive ambitions and the utter lack of sense of country of many in the ruling elite and the indifference of a passive and silent majority, the country and what is left of this democracy is now facing a crisis potentially more earthshaking than Edsa I or II.

(The author is president of MAP and president and CEO of Ferycor International Management Group Inc. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

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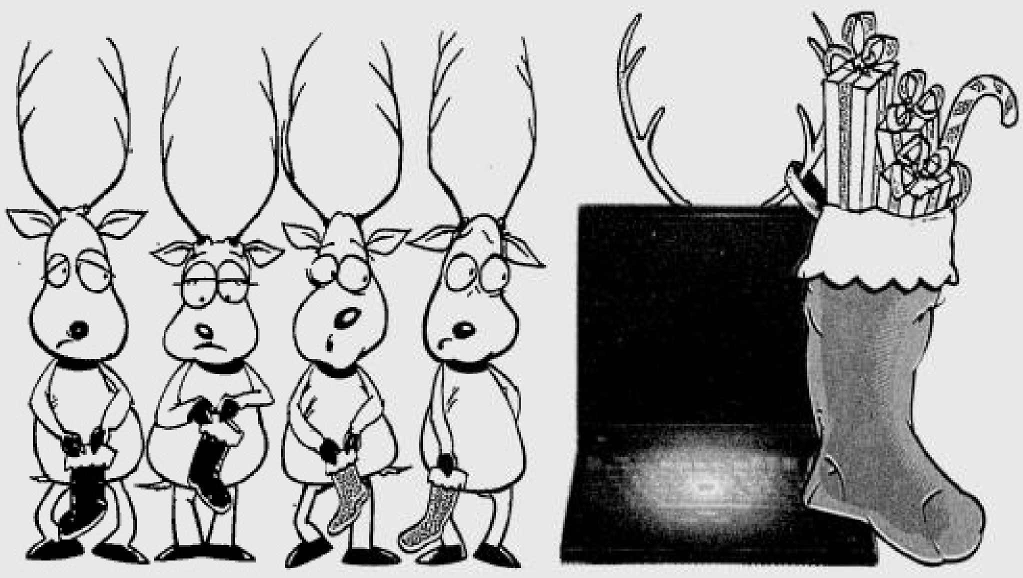

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MOVEMENTS

Pasar has new president

PHILIPPINE Associated Smelting and Refining Corp., Asia's biggest copper smelting and refining company, announced the appointment of Bruce Anderson as the company's new president, following the promotion of its former chief executive, Javier Herrero, to the vice chairmanship of the company.

Anderson has been serving as chief financial officer of Pasar since January and was able to steer Pasar into a model corporate entity that is committed to the community and the environment.

The 37-year-old officer held various positions in different companies in his home country, South Africa, starting out as an audit clerk then rising to become the chief financial officer of South Africa's third biggest coal exporter Duiker Mining in 2001, before being asked to join Pasar.

Replacing Anderson as Pasar's CFO is Paul Duncan, who used to head Pasar Manila office as VP comptroller.

Ramcar has new COO

AUTOMOTIVE battery manufacturer Ramcar Inc. recently announced the appointment of Ramon C. Agustines as its new president and chief operating officer.

Agustines will be taking over from incumbent Ramcar president Roberto V. Garcia, who is retiring from the company on Dec. 31 after 34 years of service.

Garcia will remain a Ramcar consultant handling export development and will continue to serve on the board of directors.

Agustines began working with Ramcar in 1989, where he was responsible for project management and production planning. In 1991, he spent a year in technical training with the Yuasa Battery Group in Japan. He then went to the Asian Institute of Management where he received his MBA in 1994.

Agustines was primarily responsible for the construction and commissioning of the new world-class maintenance-free battery plant of Philippine Batteries Inc. in Santa Maria, Bulacan.

New MJC officers

THE BOARD of directors of the Manila Jockey Club Inc. recently appointed Alfonso Victorio G. Reyno III as executive vice rpesident and chief operating officer and Ferdinand A. Domingo as general counsel and corporate secretary.

Reyno holds degrees in business management and political science from De La Salle University. He obtained his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines and his Masters of Laws degree from the New York University School of Law.

Domingo is a senior partner at the Reyno Tiu Domingco and Santos Law offices. He finished his Bachelor of Laws at the University of the Philippines in 1995. He is also an officer and corporate counsel of other publicly listed corporations.

The appointments are aimed at further strengthening the management set-up of MJC, the first horse racing club in Southeast Asia.

Execs earn grad degree without halting careers

SGV & Co. has partnered with the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) to offer an Executive MBA Corporate Change Program for the premier professional service firm's managers.

Under a memorandum of agreement, AIM is conducting the three-year program to broaden the business perspective and skills of SGV's audit, tax and other division managers. The program is expected to help specialist managers in SGV develop into strategic business leaders who can successfully lead business units as well as plan and implement vital organizational change.

SGV senior director Francis L. Huang said that the company chose AIM's EMBA program to "give qualified SGV managers the opportunity to earn a graduate degree without interrupting their careers."

The EMBA-SGV program gives the participants sufficient time to fulfill their duties in the workplace while they earn their degree over a three-year period. The program features real-life action projects which require students to immediately apply classroom learning on the job for the benefit of SGV.

The EMBA program aims to boost the performance and competitiveness of companies by developing managers who can effectively lead their business units.

"The EMBA seeks to develop in participants a general management perspective that is Asian and entrepreneurial in outlook. We want participants to develop a high degree of value creation, implementation and leadership skills at strategic and operating levels," said Professor Buenaventura F. Canto, EMBA-SGV program director.

The corporate change aspect of the AIM EMBA curriculum is demonstrated through the strategic management project (SMP) which requires each participant to apply what he or she has learned to produce breakthrough business results for the company. "The SMP is a results-oriented, cross-functional team-based project that showcases the strategic change management skills of the participants," said Canto.

The SMP may take the form of a growth strategy for the business, launching of a new product or service, market expansion, supply chain reengineering, corporate restructuring and/or cost management project which is approved by SGV and the AIM faculty team.

"The SMP is an important part of the program for us because we believe it will enhance our company's long-term performance in a very competitive and increasingly difficult business environment. We subscribe to lifelong learning as a strategic tool to remain at the leading edge of the industry," said Eleanor M. Montenegro, SGV's tax and business advisory services director and one of EMBA-SGV's participants.

SGV chair and managing partner Cesar V. Purisima agreed with Montenegro and added: "For the past 57 years, SGV has been known for its continuous education through rigorous training programs. These have resulted in quality people who are among the best professionals in the country. We partnered with the AIM to assure our current and future generations of professionals that we intend this culture of excellence to live on."

SGV counts among its clients a significant number of the country's top 200 corporations.

What are the do's . . .

From page B2-4

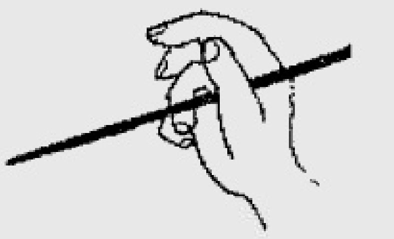
you use the other ends to bring food in your mouth.

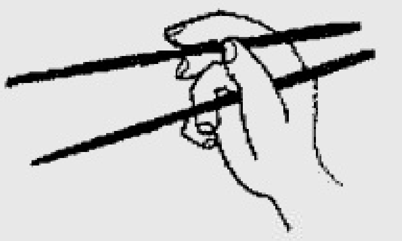
- It is polite and proper to lift small bowls of rice or soup to your chin when you eat. It prevents you from dropping food.
- When you do not get a soup spoon, it is proper to drink the soup out of the bowl and eat the solid food with chopsticks.
- For large pieces of food, you separate the piece into small pieces with your chopsticks, or you just bite a piece off and put the rest back onto your plate.

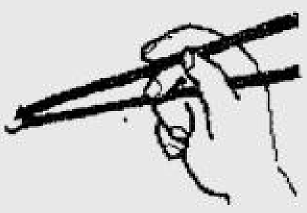
The following are considered bad manners:

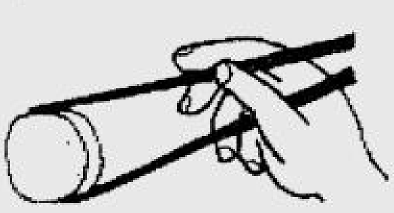
- Waving chopsticks above food dishes.
- Sticking chopsticks into food instead of picking them up.
- Picking up a cup/bowl with the hand that is holding your chopsticks.
- Sucking chopsticks.
- Sticking chopsticks vertically into a bowl of rice.
- Passing food from your chopsticks to somebody else's chopsticks.

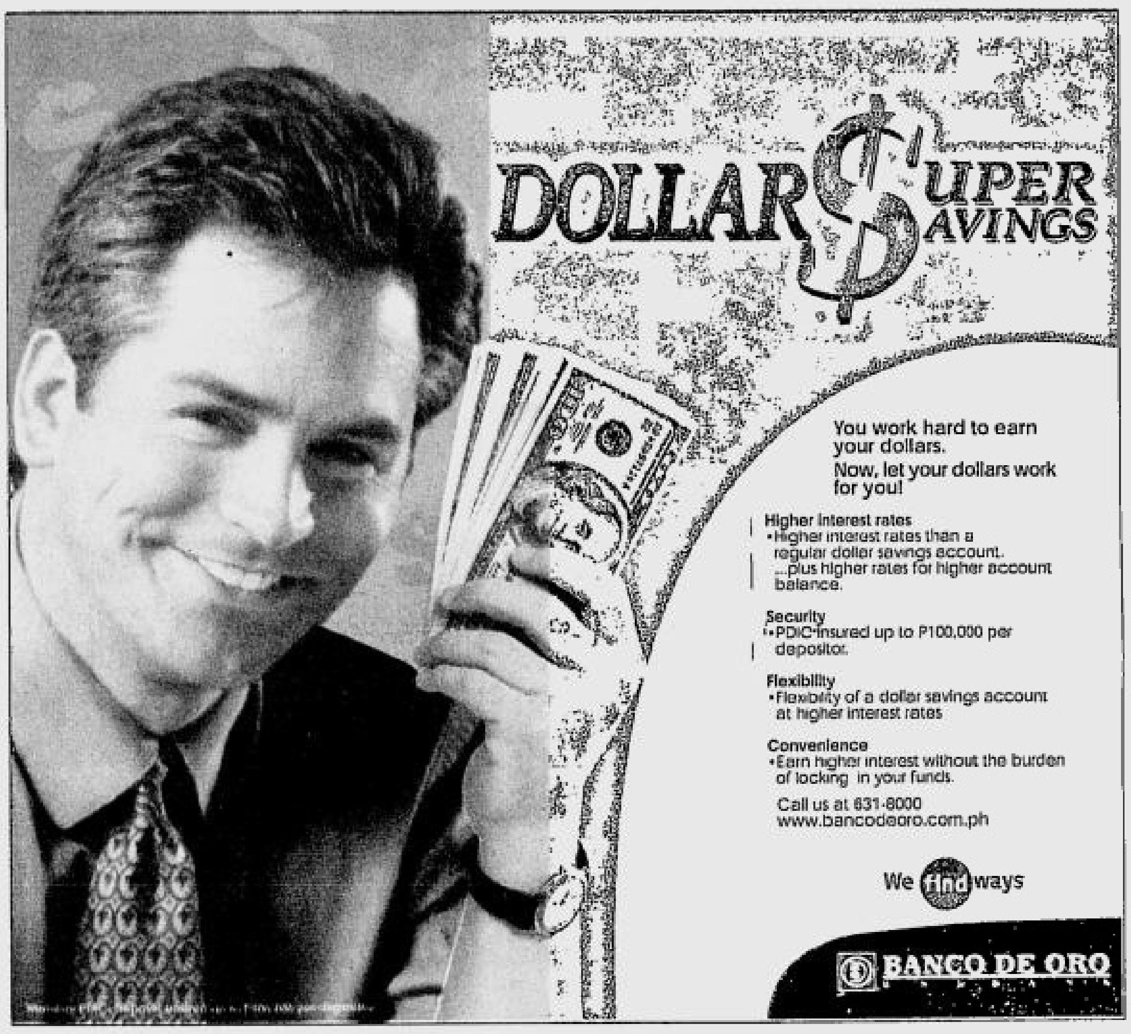
Please e-mail your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com. Names of senders will not be published.











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What are the do's and don'ts to Japanese dining etiquette?

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: I am a new employee in a top Japanese car manufacturing company here in the Philippines and I was told by my co-employees that every new employee is treated with a welcome party, which is actually a lunch or dinner out with the bosses (both Japanese and Filipinos).

Since my big boss is a Japanese, we will probably be dining in a Japanese restaurant, either fine dining or casual. Now my problem is I have never eaten in a Japanese restaurant since Japanese food doesn't appeal to me. Of course, I can't say no or change the plans since it is my boss who is treating. And who knows, I might get to like Japanese food after all.

Another problem is I'm not familiar with Japanese dining etiquette. What are the do's and don't's when eating in a fine dining or casual Japanese restaurant. And what Japanese food can you recommend to a person like me who is not fond of raw food.

A: Congratulations on your new job and thank you for taking the initiative to familiarize yourself with Japanese culture. Japanese food is delicious but would recommend that you do stay away from sushi or sashimi which are raw. If it is the first time you are going to try Japanese food then I would recommend that you order either Tempura which is a very popular dish made with batter-fried vegetables and shrimp. This is taken with a warm, slightly sweet, soy sauce with a bit of grated radish.

If you are allergic to shrimp or prefer meat or chicken, then you are safe with a beef or chicken teriyaki. This is grilled beef or chicken marinated in a sweet soy-based sauce. One of these three choices should be safe.

You will also be safe with a noodle dish such as a bowl of ramen. Udon (thick noodles) or Soba (thin buckwheat noodles) are also quite good. But I would caution against choosing a noodle dish. Although delicious, it is difficult to eat. You are not expected to know how to use chopsticks but this may be as good a time as any to learn how to use them. You can refer to the illustration below.

A good trick is to tie a rubber band between two wooden chopsticks and practice at home. Just bear in mind that if you are not comfortable using chopsticks then you can ask for a fork and knife.

Hold the upper chopstick with the index finger, the middle finger, and the thumb.

Put the other chopstick between the bottom of the thumb and the tip of the ring finger.

Move the upper chopstick only when you pick up food.

Tips on table manners

- Say "itadaki-masu" before a meal and say "gochisou-sama" after a meal. These phrases mean thanks for the food and also indicate the beginning and the ending of a meal.
- Rest chopsticks on the chopstick rest provided.
- One chopsticks rules of etiquette is not to directly pass food from your chopsticks to somebody else's chopsticks or vice versa.
- When you get food from large serving dishes, you may use the clean top ends of your chopsticks, if serving chopsticks are not available. Then,

WHAT/ B2-3

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STOSS

German GM sees the good, not mistakes

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MANAGEMENT STYLES

ONE of the industries that live and die on the quality of their service is the fiercely competitive hotel industry.

Knowing this, New World Renaissance Hotel's Stephan Stoss believes that it is his duty as general manager to make sure that his staff is motivated enough to provide the best service to the hotel's guests and clients.

Stoss, who has only been in the Philippines for eight months, does this by providing his staff with a clear vision of where he wants to take the hotel to keep it well ahead of the competition.

"I want them to embrace the Renaissance philosophy to make us different from other hotels. We train them to find out what makes our customers tick and how to build relationships with them. Everybody is a part of that," the German national tells the INQUIRER.

The 41-year-old describes the Renaissance philosophy as one that focuses on the individual needs of the guests.

It is about paying attention to little details such as what dishes guests prefer for breakfast or whether they like to be left alone or closely attended to.

"We believe that everybody is different and so far, I have seen that the staff here is great at focusing on these details. Everybody is very accommodating," Stoss says.

He adds that he gives his staff enough elbow room to make their own decisions and they are forgiven for their fair share of mistakes.

"Only the ones who do not do anything do not make mistakes, so I would rather look at the good things that they do rather than focus on mistakes," he says.

Stoss, however, stresses that the management tries to keep these mistakes to a minimum by exposing the staff to personnel training and even cross-posting to other Renaissance hotels worldwide to introduce them to different cultures and management styles.

"These give them superior experiences that they can apply when they come back here. We provide our associates with a lot of opportunities for growth because people want to work in a company where they can develop," Stoss says.

Stoss was assigned to the Philippines earlier this year, following his stint as general manager of the Renaissance Yangtze Shanghai Hotel in China, formerly the Yangtze New World Hotel. He took over the leadership of the property in March 2002 to oversee the rebranding of the hotel as a Renaissance hotel, the first in mainland China.

Stoss joined Marriott International Inc. in 1998 as resident manager for the, Marriott Hotel and Marriott Executive Apartments Budapest, Hungary, following an assignment as director of rooms operations and executive assistant manager at the Renaissance Moscow Hote, Russia from 1991 to 1997.

Before joining the Marriott group, he had appointments with the Hilton International in Abu Dhabi, Dusseldorf, London and Munich.

Stoss was born in Ulm, Germany and graduated from the Landesberufschule for Hotel and Restaurant Industry, also in Germany.

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

NO MARTYR. "Ralph and I have been together for 18 years," says the Star for All Seasons. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Vi: Running for gov is too much

'I'll decide on Dec. 19'

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTRESS and Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos may run for reelection instead of for Batangas governor because the latter post is "too big."

"A gubernatorial position is definitely a step higher in the political ladder," Vilma told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview last Friday at the sprawling LPL Compound in Lipa City.

"But I'm not power hungry," she added. "I will run where I feel I am most effective. [Running for governor is] too big a consideration."

Last August, Mayor Vi said she has three options for 2004—to run for her third and final term as mayor, to run for governor of the province, or not to run for any public office at all.

She had said she was taking

VI: RUNNING/ C3

Did You Know…

They may insist on denying that they're a romantic item, but **Edu Manzano** and sexy star **Alyssa Meyer** were seen together at MC Home Depot in Ortigas Friday afternoon. Both were in denim pants. Edu was also wearing a short-sleeved polo shirt, and Alyssa was in a fuschia blouse.

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STRIKE-A PRIZE
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PROUD MAMA Teysi T shows off son Robin's painting. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

The truth about Tessie Tomas

/C2

HIGH JACK. Russel Crowe as Capt. Jack Aubrey in Peter Weir's "Master and Commander"

'Master' maker not interested in sequels

/C8

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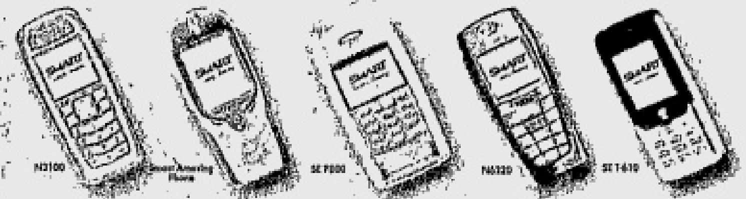

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Nokia 7650	P 1,335	P 30,000	24 months
Ericsson T-610	P 1,995	P 30,000	18 months
Nokia 6220	P 2,665	P 30,000	18 months
Nokia 6600	P 2,665	P 35,000	18 months
Ericsson P800	P 3,500	P 50,000	18 months

Note: The required deposit balance shall be on hold-out and cannot be withdrawn by the depositor for a period of 18 or 24 months from the date of redemption.

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Example: November ADB vs. December ADB; December ADB vs. January ADB; and so on. If the account does not reflect any incremental ADB increase, the account will not earn raffle entries for that particular month. The higher the ADB amount, the more raffle entries for the depositor and the higher the chances of winning.

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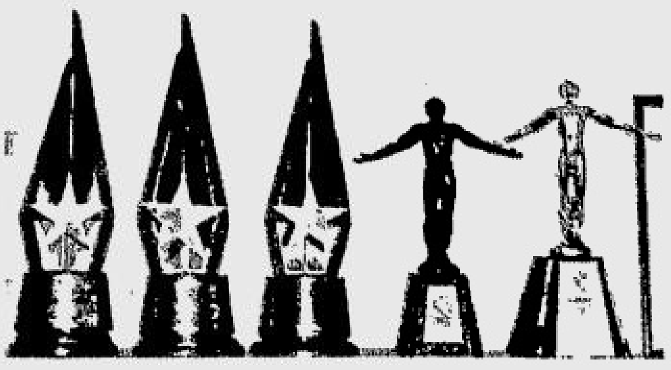
POTTY PAINTING. One of her son Robin's paintings lights up the powder room.

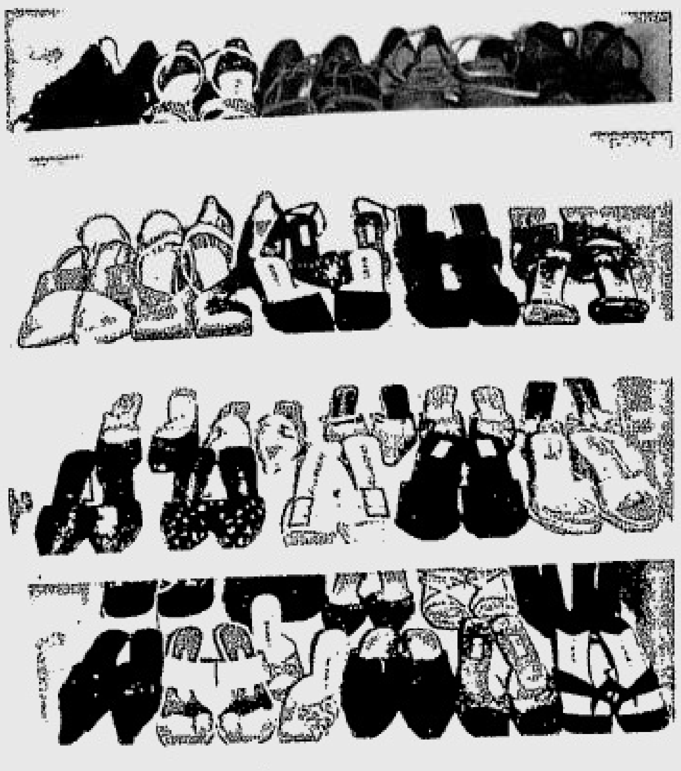


TT'S TROPHIES (left) from the Star awards for best talk show host, plus special recognition awards from the University of the Philippines

The truth about Tessie Tomas

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Photos by Rudy Esperas



LIVING UP to her character as Meldita, TT has over a hundred pairs.

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

TESSIE Tomas, refusing to let her golden years keep her from making things happen, still dreams of conquering bigger mountains.

For one, she wants to make more movies.

"I want to do more good movies," says the funny lady. "International *sana*, in the same magnitude as 'A Dangerous Life.'"

"A Dangerous Life" is an Australian production about the Marcos family where Tomas played Imelda Marcos, and for which she was nominated for an Emmy award in 1988.

She wants to write a book. "That's one of my dreams that has not come true," she says, at the same time admitting that she can't begin it yet because she always changes her mind about the subject. She would want to write about midlife crisis, or about her experiences when she took a six-month sabbatical.

She also wants to live out this fantasy: She wants to wear her Tina Turner hairpiece, complete with a Tina Turner costume and attitude, and then, in full Tina Turner regalia, walk around Makati's Greenbelt on New Year's Eve.

She puts on the hairpiece for this Closet pictorial and goes into another room of their Legazpi Village condo unit to try out the look on her husband, Roger Pullin, and to ask him to join her when she goes on her New Year's Eve jaunt. When she comes back, she says, "*Ayaw niya. Sabi ko*, 'will you walk side by side with me wearing this?' 'No way!'"

"*Minsan 'pag may* flight of fancy *ako, ginagawa ko na lang*," she adds. "I like to shock people, that's why one day I will do it. *Wala lang, gusto ko lang.*"

The Tina Turner wig is just one of her many hairpieces. She has been collecting wigs since she started impersonating celebrities and creating her own characters.

On Christmas Eve, she and Roger will have a quiet turkey dinner. Her son Robin will not be able to come home from New York, where he works as a fashion designer for B. Lucy. On Christmas Day, they will be celebrating with her mother, Laura Hermosa, in Marikina.

It's Christmas at Tessie and Roger's home. The front door of their unit is adorned with a Christmas wreath. A rectangular table in the foyer is alive with resin angels, poinsettias and Christmas balls.

"*Ako lang gumawa niyan*," she brags of the table display. "*Nagtulungan kami ni* Lorna (her secretary)." She used an old shawl as a table runner. "Mix and match *lang 'yan.* I learned that from Cynthia Gaerlan, '*huwag masyadong matakot kung hindi bagay.*'"

Gaerlan was the one who made small changes to the interiors of the condo unit. Robin's friend, Manuel Villafania, had originally redecorated the unit.

From the entrance, the visitor can see right away the 6-foot-tall Christmas tree in the living room area. Presents are neatly stacked underneath the tree.

A mint green sofa set complements the apple-green walls in the living room. Following the green motif, the windows have olive green silk curtains over bamboo shades, a refreshing alternative to venetian blinds.

On the opposite living room wall, a huge mirror from Italy creates an illusion of space. "The mirror is the most expensive piece here," offers Tessie. "The frame is made of real gold."

A red couch sits on one side of the dining set. She says it is her favorite spot. "All the touches of red here are my idea. *Mahilig ako sa* red *kasi* Scorpio *ako.*" So the powder room for guests is painted red.

Two of Robin's paintings are on the floor leaning against the wall in the powder room. Another Robin painting—of an Italian scene, complete with a gondola—hangs on the wall outside the master bedroom.

An antique divider from India stands on one side of the living room near the dining area. "This is an old piece," says Tessie. "Favorite *na* favorite *ko 'to.* I've had it even before I met Roger."

TINSEL TOWN. A tree grows in the living room and a display welcomes visitors (right) as the first lady of stand-up comedy greets the holidays.

Beside the divider is a narra table from China, a gift from her mother. A wooden TV cabinet from Baguio completes the setting.

"Eclectic" is how she describes her home. It is a showcase of things she has collected from her travels all over the world. Of all the countries she's been to, Italy is the best, she says.

The acknowledged first lady of stand-up comedy has just finished the successful series, "Si Teysi sa CR," at the Comfort Room in Makati. She says that doing live comedy is still what she loves to do because it is the most difficult.

"*Mas mahirap magpatawa kaysa magpaiyak,*" she explains. "In stand-up comedy, you need the immediate response of the audience, you need to hear the laughter. *Sa pagpapaiyak naman, kahit hindi umimik ang* audience, *okey lang.*"

Her Meldita and Bonnie Buendia are her favorite characters, although she also played many other characters like Cory Anino and Barbara Tengco, the congressman's wife.

Aside from hosting "Teysi" on ABS-CBN, she is also busy with NGO work. She is the public relations officer and a member of the board of trustees of Social Services Foundation, a non-profit, social development organization specializing in psychosocial services for refugees and disaster survivors. The group helps raise funds for the victims of the war in Mindanao.

"I do films and projects in the evacuation centers and we interview the refugees," she says. "I went to Mindanao twice in July 2002 and again in July this year. The experience really opened my eyes. I didn't know there was so much poverty and suffering in Mindanao."

She has been offered many times to run for public office but she always turns them down. "*Hindi ko siya talaga hilig,*" she says. "My husband also does not want me to. *Sabi niya, 'pag nag*-politics *daw ako, uuwi na siya sa* England."

The closest she gets to politics is when she does election-oriented comedy shows, which she also plans to produce next year, an election year.

Before she resumed her daily TV hosting chores, she had time to work out regularly at the gym. "Teysi" is aired Monday to Friday, however. "The daily show changed my life. *Nauubos ang oras ko talaga!*"

She decided to get a treadmill at home. It is conveniently located in her home office. She watches TV while sweating it out on the treadmill every morning.

Tops. "My son bought this Zara top in New York. *Pinakamadalas kong gamitin ito kasi komportable.*"

Jackets. "This Armani jacket is my favorite."

Jeans. "Favorite jeans *ko 'to*, also Armani. I bought them in New York."

Perfumes. "I like Miracle by Lancome very much."

Bags. "This pink bag from London, given by my son. Cute *'yung* design *niya*. This is from Spain, and this one's from Italy."

Shoes. Via Venetto, Casei, an Italian brand.

Costumes. "My Meldita costume won the best costume award sa Manila Film Fest. And of course, my Bonnie Buendia costume."

Jewelry. "*Itong mga ito, mga ano lang, pang*-accessorize. We put them all in a box so I can bring them easily to my shows. I have my own jewelry, and then there are those from exchange deals and sponsorships. Everywhere I go,'*pag may nakita ako, bumibili ako, lalo na nung panahon ng* Barbara Tengco. Most of these I bought in LA."

Wigs: Her Bonnie Buendia red wig from Scarlet.

HEAD TURNERS. Her collection (left) includes a Tina Turner wig and the ones she uses when impersonating political figures like GMA, Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Imelda Marcos.

BEST IN COSTUME. This Meldita coat won an award.

BOLD STAR Bonnie Buendia, a character she gave life to, wore this costume in TT's favorite color.

BARBARA'S BAUBLES. As sitcom character Barbara Tengco, she wore these accessories bought from LA and Hong Kong.

RUNNING WOMAN on the treadmill

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'Mano Po 2' essay contest to bring winner to Shanghai

REGAL Entertainment Inc. invites all high school and college students nationwide to join the "Mano Po 2, My Home" essay writing contest.

The top prize is a trip to Shanghai, China.

"'Mano Po 2' aims to promote better understanding between the Filipino and Chinese cultures," says Regal's "Mother" Lily Monteverde. "This contest is in line with that goal. We hope to inspire and educate."

Contestants must write in 800-1,000 words their thoughts and reflections on "Mano Po 2, My Home."

First prize is a trip for three to Shanghai. Second prize is P15,000 in cash. Third prize is P10,000; fourth prize; P7,000; fifth prize, P5,000.

The contest starts Dec. 25, the opening of "Mano Po 2, My Home," and runs until Jan. 30, 2004.

For details, please refer to posters and other announcements as the playdate draws near.

Regal has also lined up an exhibit of cast photographs by Xander Angeles and the release of the "Mano Po 2" book.

"Mano Po 2, My Home," the official Regal entry in the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF), is the story of how a family comes together because of love.

It continues the legacy began by the box-office hit and award-winning "Mano Po," from the 2002 MMFF.

Directed by Erik Matti and written by Roy Iglesias, "Mano Po 2" has an all-star cast: Susan Roces, Christopher de Leon, Lorna Tolentino, Zsa Zsa Padilla, Kris Aquino, Judy Ann Santos, Jay Manalo, Carmina Villaroel, Alessandra de Rossi, Cogie Domingo, Richard Gutierrez, Chynna Ortaleza, Angel Locsin.

'MANO PO 2, MY HOME' hopes to inspire, educate

UNITED BY LOVE. Armida Siguion-Reyna (middle, second row) leads the cast as the matriarch of the Filipinas family.

'Filipinas' is about family and country

"FILIPINAS," Viva Films' entry in the 2003 Metro Manila Film Festival, is a grand family drama featuring the biggest and brightest stars of Philippine cinema, directed by Joel Lamangan from a script by Roi Iglesias.

Filipinas is the surname of the family in the story, but it may as well refer to the country. Like the country, the family goes through trying and tumultuous times.

Maricel Soriano, Richard Gomez, Dawn Zulueta, Aiko Melendrez, Victor Neri and Wendell Ramos play the children of Armida Siguion Reyna, a widowed former school principal who keeps her family together despite overwhelming odds.

Also starring are Raymond Bagatsing, Andrea del Rosario, Sunshine Dizon, Tanya Garcia, Anne Curtis and Sarah Geronimo in her movie debut. Sarah also sings the movie's theme song, "Paano Kita Mapapasalamatan."

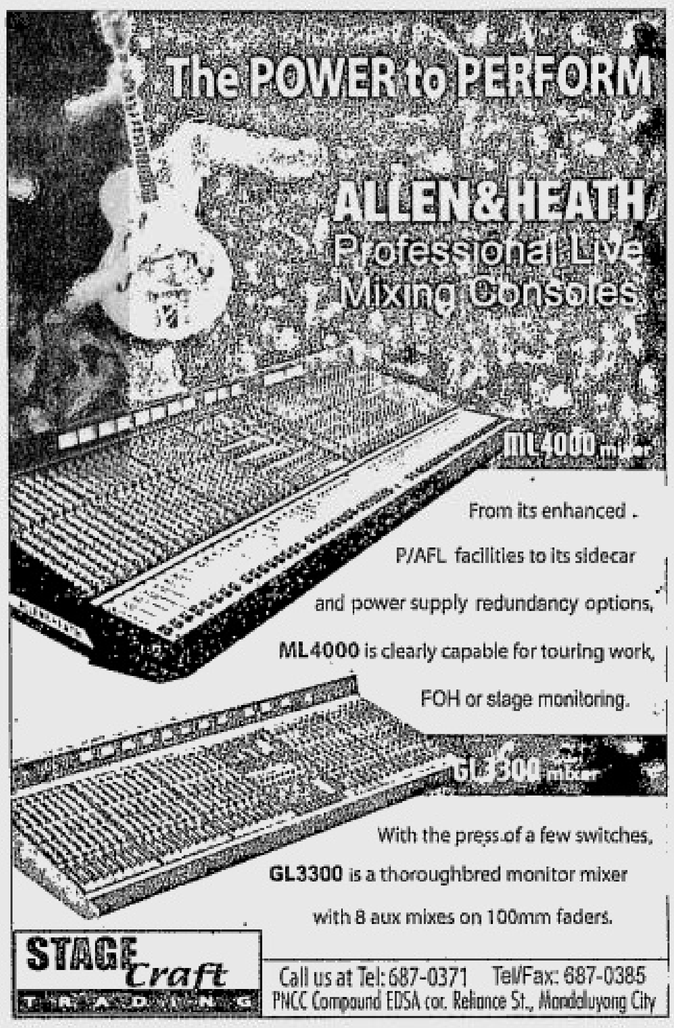
The story of "Filipinas" is told from the point of view of the character of Maricel, the devoted daughter who remains loyal to her mother even when she feels her siblings have betrayed her.

The Filipinas children are divided by ambition, principle and geography. Deep-seated hurts and clashing egos and interests divide them, leaving their mother broken-hearted. A tragedy strikes the family on Christmas, the season of joy, hope and peace, and keeps the family praying and staying together.

"Filipinas" is a collaboration of Lamangan and Iglesias, the tandem behind "Mano Po," the top-grosser and big winner in the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival.

Maricel, Richard, Dawn Aiko, Raymond and Armida have all been honored by the Urian, Academy, Star, Famas, Young Critics Circle, Metro Manila Filmfest and Manila Filmfest for previous performances.

Joel's "Flor Contemplacion Story," also from Viva, won best picture and best actress (Nora Aunor) honors at Cairo international film festival.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Disney Channel gets in holiday mode

SHOW TIME

DISNEY Channel is showing programs meant to make the holiday season even more exciting.

The Studio D line-up on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 to 11 a.m. just got better with new episodes of "Proud Family" and the introduction of "Sabrina, The Animated Series."

In the new season of "Proud Family," Penny's quest to balance her home, school and social lives are further complicated by over-protective parents, annoying siblings and the endless hours of schoolwork. In "Sabrina," the well-known witch is seen as a 12-year-old without full access to her powers and spells but is just as adorable and full of mischief.

The new non-stop adventures of "Untalkative Bunny" are on weekdays, 3-4:30 p.m.

On the "Wonderful World of Disney," join Eloise, the loveable six-year-old resident of New York's Plaza Hotel in "Eloise at the Plaza," Dec. 20, 7:30 p.m. Eloise is always causing mischief and mayhem, often dragging a beleaguered nanny (Julie Andrews) along for the ride.

Things get even better from Christmas week onwards with Disney Channel specials starting with "Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol," the classic tale of Ebenezer Scrooge and his evening with the three ghosts alongside loveable characters Bob Cratchit and his ailing son Tiny Tim. The timeless tale airs on Christmas Eve, 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Day at 7:30 p.m. has "Beauty and the Beast: Enchanted Christmas," the sequel to the Academy Award-nominated "Beauty and the Beast."

On Dec. 27 at 7:30 p.m., catch the Asian TV premiere of "Lilo and Stitch." There's trouble and plenty of laughter in paradise when Lilo, a lonely Hawaiian girl, wishes upon a falling star for someone to be her friend.

The rambunctious Stitch, a.k.a. Experiment 626, makes a comeback with "Stitch! The Movie" on New Year's Eve at 7:30 p.m. Stitch, Pleakley and Dr. Jumba are all part of the household now. But what Lilo and Stitch don't know is that Dr. Jumba also brought his batch of 625 experiments to earth. Evil scientist Dr. Hamsterviel and his henchman, Captain Gantu, want the experiments back, so now it's up to Lilo and Stitch to rescue his alien cousins.

There's more. Follow the story of "Dumbo" on Dec. 22, the exploits of Buzz Lightyear and his friends in "Toy Story 2" on Dec. 23, the adventures of the "Snow Dogs" on Dec. 26, and true love in "Hunchback of Notre Dame II" on Dec. 28.

Disney Channel also offers Disney's famed animated movies, series, specials, sitcoms, family dramas and live action movies and adventure stories.

Disney Channel Asia was established in 1996 and is available in Brunei, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

Vi: Running for gov...

From page C1

her time to decide because "I also have other roles in life that are equally demanding and tiring."

Last Friday, she said, "There is no third option anymore (not to run). We will announce our decision on Dec. 19, including the names of the 10 councilors who will be running on our ticket."

The mayor, known in the movie industry as the Star for All Seasons, said she has qualms about running for governor because "taking over the whole Batangas is not a joke."

"I still have to have time for my family," she said. "My constituents in Lipa are used to this already, but can you expect the whole of Batangas to understand this?"

Mayor Vi is married to Sen. Ralph Recto, from a Batangas political clan. They have a 7-year-old son, Ryan Christian. The actress also has a son by actor Edu Manzano—VJ and television host Luis Manzano, 22.

Recto was congressman of the fourth and largest district of Batangas from 1992 to 2001.

White flowers

The actress said she turned down invitations to run for public office thrice and only said yes when "I finally got the sign that I prayed for."

"I didn't know anything about politics," admitted the award-winning star who has been in the movies since she was 9. "I was really hesitant. I told God that I would run only if I got a sign: if someone would give me a white flower of any kind.

"The sign came when I was only a few minutes away from announcing my decision."

Mayor Vi said she was talking with her husband on the cell phone when she glanced at a makeshift altar in her house in Green Meadows, Pasig City. "Sure enough, there was a vase full of white daisies at the altar. I couldn't believe it. I had to cut my conversation with Ralph because I became too distracted. I found out later on that my florist had sent them."

She took up a five-unit course in public administration at the University of the Philippines before she occupied the Lipa mayor's office. "My staff went to school with me," she said. "We tackled everything there is to know about Lipa."

She said she feels secure because her husband helps her decide what's best for her city. "He remains my senior adviser," she said. "Lipa City benefits from Ralph's being a senator. I get exclusive information about what is happening [at the Senate]."

The Rectos celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary last Dec. 11. They are leaving for the United States on Dec. 22 for a vacation.

"Ralph and I had been together for eight years before we got married," she said. "It's been 18 years now. We know better than to believe people who have nothing in mind but to destroy our marriage."

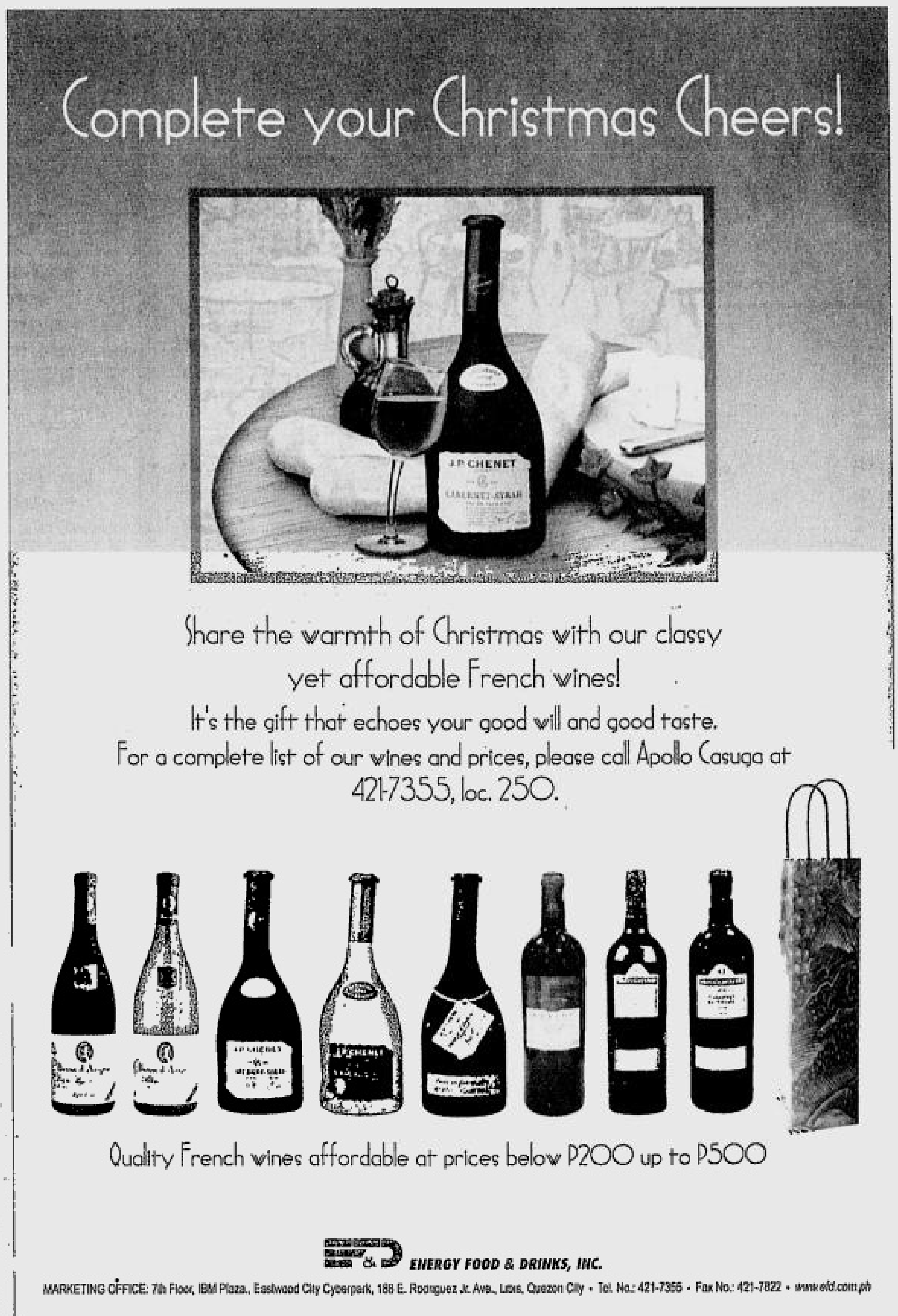
Mayor Vi said rumors of her husband's alleged womanizing do not affect her anymore. Just last October, the senator was reportedly seen in an exclusive resort in Nasugbu, Batangas, with a woman believed to be a guest relations officer from Pegasus nightclub in Quezon City.

According to witnesses, Recto and the GRO had been on a cruise on the senator's yacht for two days. But a relative claimed Recto never went to the Nasugbu resort and that in fact he and his actress wife were attending a Sergio Mendez concert in Manila.

"I'm no martyr," Mayor Vi said. "If ever there's an incident that I feel he has violated me as a wife, trust me, I will not keep quiet. But I know the truth."

When the Rectos return from their US trip on Jan. 7, Mayor Vi will be busy preparing for the Jan. 20 Lipa fiesta, one of the most celebrated events in the city.

"I enjoy what I'm doing right now," she said. "Most of the time, I put public service over my love for show biz."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8 MYSTIC RIVER

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3 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
4 OUT OF TIME
5 WRONG TURN
6 COLD CREEK MANOR
7 THE GRUDGE
8 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2

SM CITY BACOOR
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3 CABIN FEVER
4 ELF
5 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
6 MR. SUAVE
7 ALIPIN
8 RUGRATS GO WILD

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3 BABAE SA BREAKWATER
4 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
5 COLD CREEK MANOR
6 SCARY MOVIE 3

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2 THE GRUDGE
3 CABIN FEVER
4 ALIPIN

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[illegible]

1 THE GRUDGE
2 ALIPIN
3 MR. SUAVE
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2

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1 ELF
2 MR. SUAVE
3 WRONG TURN
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2

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1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
2 ELF
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8 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
9 GOOD BOY!
10 MR. SUAVE

SM SOUTHMALL
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1 RUGRATS GO WILD
2 MYSTIC RIVER
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS
4 GOOD BOY!
5 THE GRUDGE
6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
7 MR. SUAVE
8 CABIN FEVER
9 INTERNET QUEEN
10 ALIPIN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
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1 GOOD BOY!
2 RUGRATS GO WILD
3 ALIPIN
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
5 CHAVIT SINGSON
6 THE GRUDGE
7 MYSTIC RIVER
8 CABIN FEVER
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10 SCARY MOVIE 3
11 LOONEY TUNES
12 INTERNET QUEEN

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3 DARK BLUE
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4 WRONG TURN

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1 MYSTIC RIVER
RESERVE-A-SEAT dial [illegible]
2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
4 OUT OF TIME
5 ELF
6 THE GRUDGE
7 RUGRATS GO WILD
8 STAR RUNNER
9 CABIN FEVER
10 GOOD BOY!
11 INTERNET QUEEN
12 ALIPIN

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
[illegible]

1 JEEPERS CREEPERS
2 INTERNET QUEEN
3 MR. SUAVE
4 ALIPIN

SM CITY ILOILO
[illegible]

1 SEX SCANDAL
2 RESERVED
3 THE PHONE
4 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
5 SCARY MOVIE 3
6 UPTOWN GIRLS
7 RESERVED
8 THE WISHER

SM CITY MANILA
[illegible]

1 GOOD BOY!
2 ELF
3 CABIN FEVER
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
5 RUGRATS GO WILD
6 MYSTIC RIVER
7 ALIPIN
8 INTERNET QUEEN
9 THE GRUDGE
10 SCARY MOVIE 3
11 STAR RUNNER
12 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
[illegible]

1 MASTER & COMMANDER
2 STAR RUNNER
3 THE WISHER
4 LOONEY TUNES

SM CITY BAGUIO
[illegible]

1 SCARY MOVIE 3
2 LOONEY TUNES
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2	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2 11:35, 2:05, 4:35, 7:05, 9:40	5	CABIN FEVER 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
3	RUGRATS GO WILD 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:50	6	GOOD BOY 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:50
7	INTERNET QUEEN 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00	9	THE GRUDGE 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
8	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	10	ELF 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

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3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 RUGRATS GO WILD - 11:10, 1:00, 2:50, 4:40, 6:30, 8:20, 10:00
5 GOOD BOY - 10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40
6 CABIN FEVER - 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
7 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2 - 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

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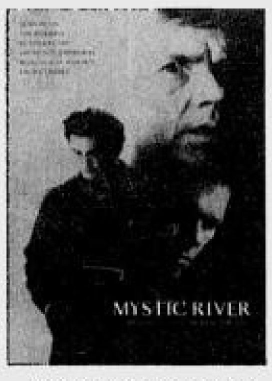
CHAVIT SINGSON STORY	6	THE WISHER



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INTOLERABLE CRUELTY **PG13** 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	**CABIN FEVER** **R18** 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:00	**MYSTIC RIVER** **R13** 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:35, 10:20

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Less is more

LAST Dec. 5, we were happy to see that the opening ceremonies of the 22nd Southeast Asian Games were being telecast.

We sat contentedly in front of the TV set, comfort snack yummily close at hand, and looked forward to having a good time viewing the special show that the Vietnamese had whipped up to mark the start of the regional sportsfest with an appropriate cultural flourish.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

As the huge presentation began, we were truly impressed with its cast of thousands, visually thrilling laser display, and what looked like an endless series of visual highlights and surprises.

Unfortunately, our enjoyment was compromised by the local coverage hosts who kept talking throughout the long presentation. They must have thought that they were being of service to us viewers, commenting on and "clarifying" the elements of the show, the narration of which was in Vietnamese, with no English translation.

So, the hosts in the studio must have felt that local viewers needed help in trying to figure out and better appreciate what was going on. Thus, they talked a blue streak, pointing out this detail and that piece of "symbolism."

Instead of being grateful to them, however, we got ticked off, because their prattle made it difficult for us to concentrate on the show itself. In cultural instances like this, less is definitely more, and the hosts' frequent comments were much too much!

Aside from talking too much, the hosts weren't helpful because what they said was often too obvious for words. To illustrate:

"It's impressive. *'Yung nagsasayaw ka*, you should form a straight line, *napakahirap noon!*"

"*Ilang daang* choreographer *kaya ang gumawa nyan?*" (Hundreds of choreographers? Come on.)

"*'Yang* 4,000 performers *na 'yan, may tig-isang* portion of the show *ba 'yan, o nagpapalit pa sila ng* costume?" (Shouldn't you know?)

"*Ilang buwan kaya ang ginugol nila sa* rehearsals?" "*Hindi lang buwan, isang taon siguro!*" (Ditto.)

"*Nakita niyo 'yung apat na linya na 'yon, diretsong diretso!*" (What's with this fetish for straight lines?)

"I notice *may* flowers *itong* cultural presentation. Any cultural presentation, *hindi nawawalan ng bulaklak!*" (Brilliant observation!)

"*'Yang* symbolic image *na yan, nagse*-celebrate *ng kaya nating gawin, at ng kaya pa nating gawin!*"

"Obvious *na hindi biro-biro ang* rehearsals." (Do tell!)

"*Ipinapakita talaga ang* skills and talents *ng* Vietnamese!"

"*Isa pa itong magandang* formation *na nagawa nila.*"

"*At napaka*-synchronized! *Ang ganda ng* pacing, *pati 'yung* facial expression!"

"*Napakaganda—tingnan mo, may* lifting *pa silang ginagawa!*"

"*Parang* fiery *'yung nakikita natin ngayon.*"

At this point, the "annotation" stopped, and we were able to view long minutes of the show in relative peace. We were grateful for the respite because it enabled us to appreciate the presentation's visual and aural subtleties.

Later, however, the hosts must have gotten their second wind, because they resumed their idle prattle, to wit:

"*Ngayon, pasok ang mga kabataan—hawak nila ang mga parol.*" (We can see that, OK?)

"*Sabay-sabay pa rin ang* steps*—wala pa akong nakikitang nagkamali!*"

"I would presume *na matagal pa itong palabas.*"

"*Nag*-formation *sila na parang bahay na may bubong—parang sinasabi nila na nasa isang bahay tayong lahat, mga kapatid ang turing!*"

"*Halos walang katapusan na yata itong palabas na ito!*" (And that goes double for your excessive "annotation.")

In future, coverage hosts should let cultural shows speak for themselves. If you have little that's helpful to contribute, say little.

You may like to hear yourselves talk, but viewers would really love a little peace and quiet.

Willy free at last

OSLO—Keiko, the killer whale star of the "Free Willy" movies who spent most of his life in captivity, has died in a Norwegian fjord after failing to readapt to the wild despite a five-year $20-million re-adaptation program, his handlers said on Saturday.

"Two days ago he began to be a bit lethargic and wouldn't accept food," one of the handlers, Dane Richards, told AFP. "We suspect he came down with a bit of pneumonia."

The six-ton Keiko died on Friday afternoon at the age of 27, Richards said, in the Taknes fjord in western Norway where he settled after his release from Iceland last year.

The orca was captured as a young calf off Iceland in 1979, and spent most of his life in captivity, mostly in water theme parks and starring in movies.

He was taken to Canada and then on to Mexico, where the first of the successful three "Free Willy" movies about a boy trying to free a whale from captivity was filmed in 1993. *AFP*

In praise of garbage

REVIEW

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE CINEMA of Abjection is a distortion of film realism. It was what resulted when some film artists pushed Italian Neorealism to the extreme. Among the prototypes were Tod Browning's "Freaks" and Buñuel's "Los Olvidados."

Years later, Fellini in "Satyricon" and "Roma" somewhat glamorized, even delighted in, freakishness and human abjection. That development was embraced with glee by Pasolini.

In recent years, certain Russian filmmakers such as Artur Aristakisyan popularized this kind of cinema ("Ladoni," "A Place on Earth"). And now it has become somewhat of a trend from Indonesia to Korea to Latin America, even in unlikely places like Canada ("Léolo") and the United States ("Gummo").

In the country, its prime exponent is undoubtedly Mario O'Hara. This edgiest of Filipino filmmakers, who previously explored the dark recesses of psychodrama and noir, is pushing to the edge the film realism espoused by Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal.

We thought O'Hara's filmmaking took a dangerous turn when he came up with "Babae sa Bubungang Lata," where he investigated the life forms in cemeteries through images of prostitution, castration, homosexuality, necrophilia. It was an interesting multilayered film, and he used those only as metaphors to indict the Philippine movie industry.

So we were somehow prepared for the slime and sleaze when, three years after his last film, he returned with his latest specimen of the Cinema of Abjection: "Ang Babae sa Breakwater."

Even then, we didn't know there was such a film being made, and we heard its title and lead actors' names only on the week it was premiered, and it's supposedly poised to be sent to the Berlin film festival—so, were we surprised.

The title, the milieu, the tyro thespians, and the inclusion of Yoyoy Villame in the billing somehow helped in the build-up before we went to watch this tribute to the abject. And there's the guarantee of the name of the director, who also wrote the script.

Hidden community

O'Hara, an underrated and neglected filmmaker, makes films only every 2-3 years, so every time a film of his is released, it acquires an aura of eventfulness among Filipino cinéastes. We still think his last film before this, "Pangarap ng Puso," is one of the best Filipino films in recent years.

Some Filipino filmmakers have explored the railroad tracks, notably Tikoy Aguiluz in "Biyaheng Langit" and Ditsi Carolino in "Riles," so O'Hara makes a turn to a yet unexplored but no less dangerous byway.

"Ang Babae sa Breakwater" examines that hidden community dwelling in the cavelike recesses of the miles-long breakwater running along Roxas Boulevard facing Manila Bay. The place is swarming with scavengers and beggars, goons and pickpockets, hookers and junkies, the dispossessed and socially disenfranchised—in other words, the dregs of society.

This our charming politicians are trying to cover up with food kiosks, fun palaces, cultural centers, tourists' promenades, and the world-famous sunset of Manila Bay. And O'Hara tries to confront and expose the underbelly: Look, there are people here! These are Filipinos living in subhuman condition right in the heart of the shining city!

It's a heartbreaking premise. Sadly, the film is not as heartbreaking.

It is the love story of diseased streetwalker Paquita (played by Katherine Luna) and provincial boy-turned-city scum Basilio (Kristofer King). Yes, these are humans, but as characterized in the film, they're hardly sympathetic at all.

KATHERINE LUNA, in the title role, and fellow newcomer Kristofer King can't credibly portray suffering.

Maybe seeking that audience empathy, the filmmaker traces Basilio's roots in Leyte. He shows how the lad has been dislocated by rural violence and fled from his province with his brother, only to land as *mga batang yagit* in Manila.

This is a common occurrence in the country, but the filmmaker chooses to be vague about what has caused the exodus in the first place. Is it insurgency? Militarism? Religious cultism? Personal vendetta? Or simple thuggery?

So the viewer cannot properly place his empathy, which is the knowing of another's pain. (Tell me first what pains you, okay?)

Love story of scums

The love story itself, which takes most of the film's running time, is too flimsy to hold together a ponderous sociopolitical premise. And the plot veers further with the introduction of

IN PRAISE/ C6

ANONG MGA PROGRAMA SA RADYO ANG PINAKASIKAT?

TOP RATING MULTI-WEEKLY PROGRAMS BY DAY PART AM AND FM STATIONS*

Rank	Program Title	Station	Time	Day	Rating
6:00 AM - 10:00 AM					
1	RADYO PATROL BALITA	DZMM	7:00 - 7:30	Mon - Sat	14.6 %
2	TODO BALITA	DZMM	6:00 - 7:00	Mon - Fri	13.7
3	DOS POR DOS	DZMM	7:30 - 8:00	Mon - Fri	12.1
4	KORINA SA UMAGA	DZMM	8:00 - 10:00	Mon - Fri	11.5
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM					
1	TV PATROL	DZMM	6:00 - 6:30	Mon - Fri	15.0 %
2	PASADA 630	DZMM	4:30 - 6:00	Mon - Fri	10.0
3	USAPANG DE CAMPANILLA	DZMM	6:30 - 8:00	Mon - Fri	9.1
4	RADYO PATROL BALITA	DZMM	4:00 - 4:30	Mon - Sat	5.8

TOP RATING ONCE-A-WEEK PROGRAMS BY DAY PART AM AND FM STATIONS*

Rank	Program Title	Station	Time	Day	Rating
6:00AM - 10:00 AM					
1	MAGANDANG MORNING PART II	DZMM	7:30 - 8:00	Sat	12.7 %
2	SAGOT KO YAN	DZMM	8:00 - 9:30	Sat	8.7
3	SUPER RADYO NATIONWDE	DZBB	6:00 - 8:00	Sat	5.2
4	MAGANDANG MORNING PART I	DZMM	6:00 - 7:00	Sat	5.1
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM					
1	RADYO NEGOSYO	DZMM	6:00 - 6:30	Sat	8.7 %
2	KABALIKAT:LOREN LEGARDA SA DZMM	DZMM	4:30 - 6:00	Sat	8.0
3	ALL REQUEST SATURDAY	DWTM	4:00 - 6:00	Sat	7.0
4	MAGANDANG GABI BAYAN	DZMM	6:30 - 8:00	Sat	6.5

* Coincidental Private Car Radio Survey - Metro Manila
20-25 October 2003
Official RRC-Commissioned & Supervised Study

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RADYO PATROL SAIS TRENTA
Una Sa Balita! Una Sa Public Service!

Numero Uno para sa mga motorista sa Metro Manila!

MARAMING, MARAMING SALAMAT, KAPAMILYA!

In praise of garbage

From page C5

noir elements.

Or is it the other way around? Maybe we got it wrong. Maybe the filmmaker never intended to deliver a sociopolitical tract in the first place, but only wanted to tell a love story set in a down-and-out milieu?

In any case, the two newcomers playing lovers render uninvolving performances—not that they don't know how to act, but that they can't quite manage a credible portrayal of human suffering, not to say handle a reasonable range of human emotions. Most of the time they look stolid, while the peripheral characters and atmosphere people turn up despondent faces as they go through their little lives in lumbering movement.

The Felliniesque grotesquery is merely amusing, never evoking in the audience that sense of terror and wonder Fellini would have conjured from such faces, limbs and torsos.

The technical aspects are largely rudimentary, such as the boy's facile catching in the shallows of a fish that can feed a family. Or the make-up for Paquita's skin disease, which looks like a scattering of polka dots. These are incidental details, but their haphazard quality and accumulation, along with the filmmaker's theatricality, more and more alienate the viewer.

We think the last sequence is novel, though, with the extras giving an ensemble performance that plays like a compilation of outtakes.

As for Yoyoy Villame, we're right about this one. Improbably, he renders the film's more poignant moments by serving as a one-man chorus punctuating maudlin or violent scenes by dishing out tender traditional Visayan airs such as "Gugma," "Rosas Pandan," "Ay! ay! Kalisud!"

In this O'Hara's ode to flotsam and the human grotesque, we think Villame is the most human presence. And he's not even a character in the story.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	ALIPIN
Ali 2	ELF
Ali 3	CABIN FEVER
Ali 4	MYSTIC RIVER
Ali 5	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
Ali 6	RUGRATS
Ali 7	GOODBOY

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ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	ALIPIN
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	ANG BABAE SA BREAKWATER
B	AKO, IKAW, SIYA
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

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CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MR. SUAVE
CINEMA-2	ALIPIN
CINEMA-3	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	OUT OF TIME
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	STAR RUNNER
CINEMA-6	CHAVIT
CINEMA-7	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
CINEMA-8	18 KARATS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	GOOD BOY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MYSTIC RIVER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	RUGRATS GO WILD
CINEMA-12	CABIN FEVER
CINEMA-14	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
CINEMA-15	ELF

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	WRONG TURN
CINEMA-1	CHAVIT
CINEMA-2	LOONEY TUNES
CINEMA-4	DARK BLUE

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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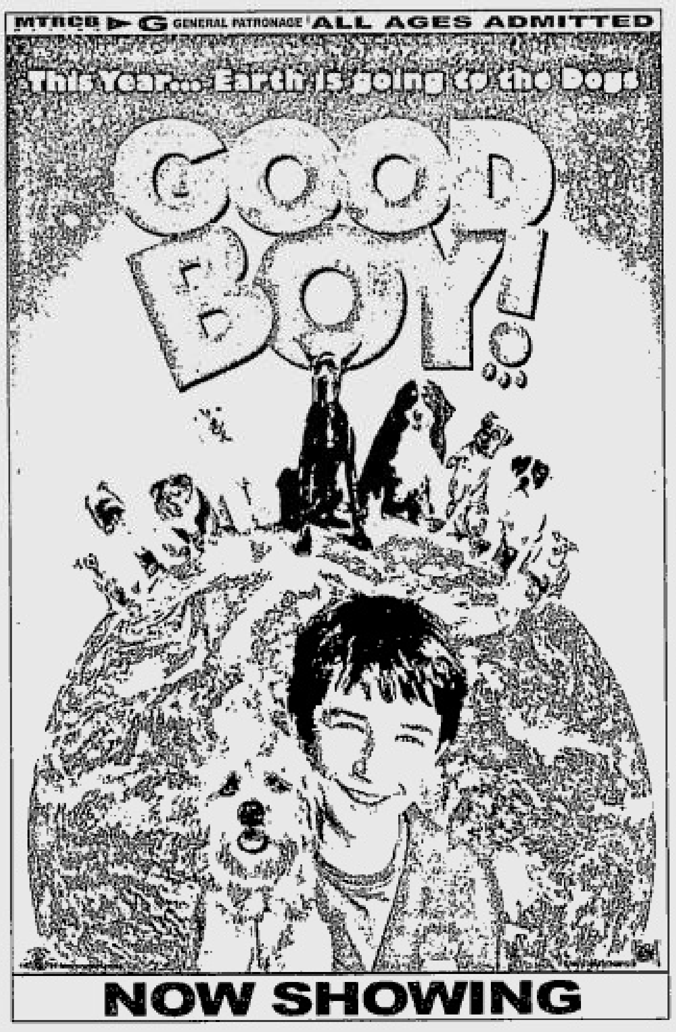

MTRCB G GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED
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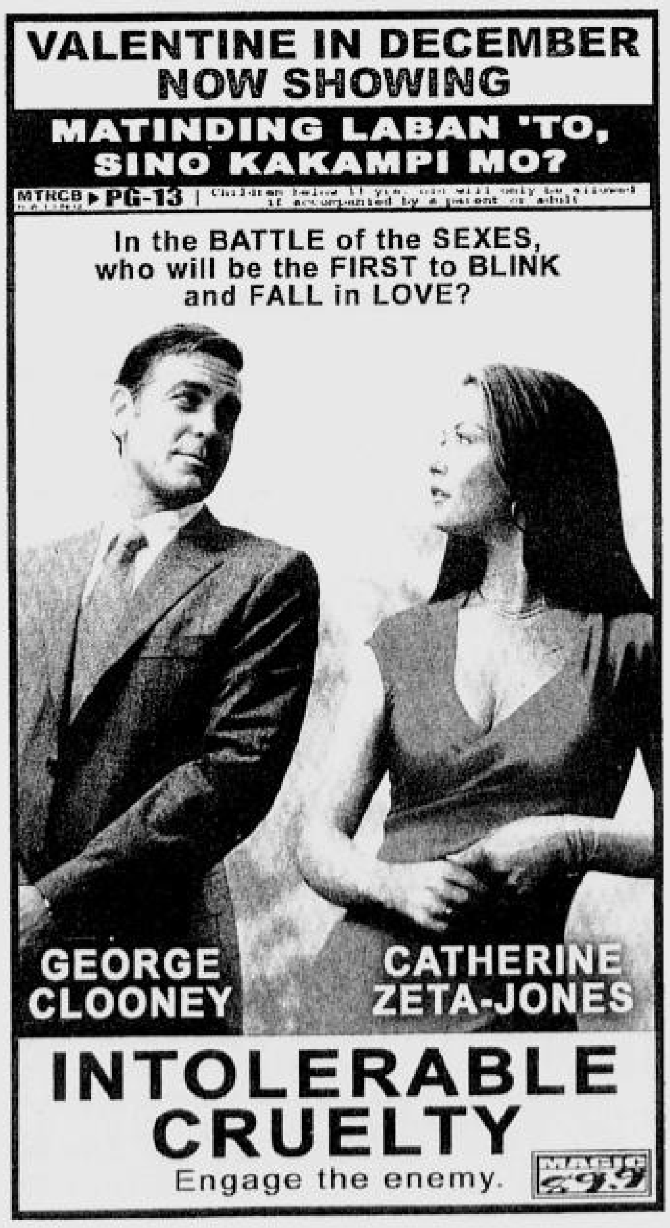
GOOD BOY!
NOW SHOWING



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INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
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MAGIC 89.9

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 ELF	1 ELF	ArtFilm 1 BALZAC 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY 2:50 5:00 7:10 9:20 11:30	THX 1 MYSTIC RIVER
2 MYSTIC RIVER	2 THE GRUDGE	2 MYSTIC RIVER 12:35 3:25 6:15 9:05	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 MYSTIC RIVER 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:15	2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
3 CABIN FEVER	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 MYSTIC RIVER 2:00 4:50 7:50 10:30	Onstage REGINE VELASQUEZ Dec. 19 & 20 - 9 pm	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN 1:30 3:45 6:00 8:15 10:30	3 ELF
4 OUT OF TIME	4 GOOD BOY		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 ELF 2:35 4:45 6:55 9:05, 11:15	4 GOOD BOY
	5 RUGRATS GO WILD		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 OUT OF TIME 1:30 3:45 6:00 8:15 10:30	5 RUGRATS GO WILD
	6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY			
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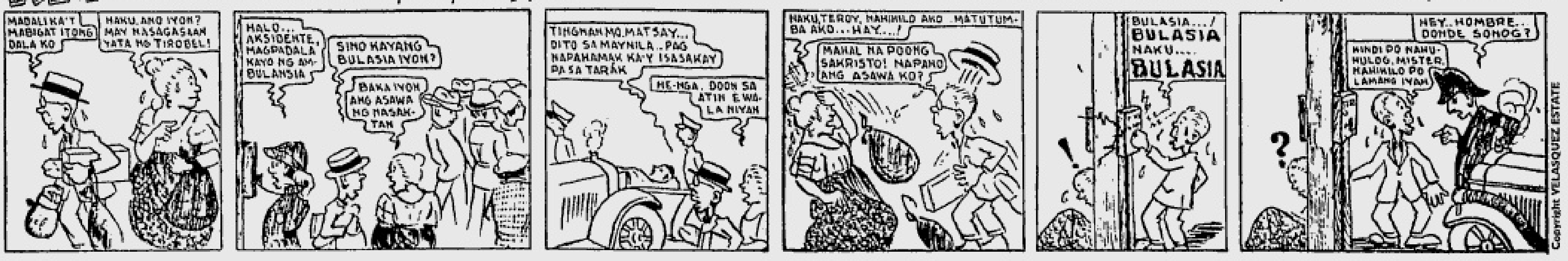
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'Master' maker not interested in sequels

From page C8

"They were my two key actors," he says, beaming. "And I had some very good Filipino supporting players. I loved it (the Philippines) very much and haven't got back there since. I'd love to go back."

It has been 20 years since "The Year of . . ." brought Weir to the attention of American movie producers. Now, with the unanimous critical acclaim he is receiving for "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World," the Sydney native could earn his fourth Oscar best director nomination (and perhaps finally win?).

Both New York Post and CNN.com screamed the same headline, "Masterful!," while The New York Times raved, "stupendously entertaining movie."

The almost six-year wait for a new Weir film after "The Truman Show" with Jim Carrey is worth it.

Weir explains the big gap between the two movies: "The reason I wasn't in Hollywood was that I couldn't find anything I liked from what they were sending me. It was a frustrating period. The only thing that alleviated the frustration was reading, for my own interest, some wonderful books about the British Navy by a guy called Patrick O'Brian. And that was my pleasure while I read all this junk coming from Hollywood. It was quite a coincidence that 'Master and Commander' should be the very project that is presented to me."

Weir has created an authentic cinematic rendering of two books from the late O'Brian's 20-volume serial novel.

Natural activity

With the Napoleonic Wars raging in 1805 as his setting, Weir paints an impressively detailed tale of Capt. Jack Aubrey (Russel Crowe), one of the fiercest British navy officers, who is ordered to battle the French.

"While making the movie," says Weir, "it was like I was living in the early 19th century basically. It became funny to go from filming on the gun deck of the ship and then when I turned the television on, there were tanks rolling in the desert. War goes on. It seems to be a natural human activity."

While his material took him two centuries back, Weir looked to the future for inspiration in his magnificent contribution to the seafaring epic genre. He postulates that in the 19th century, shipping expeditions were the equivalent of space explorations.

"I wanted to refresh this genre," he declares. "I borrowed from the space adventure movies that started with 'Aliens' and so on with the spacecraft heading into the unknown outer space. I brought that spirit to this movie's era, the age of discovery. I opened this movie the same way, for the audience to feel the ocean and the proud ship heading out into the unknown. And that the land that I touched on would be like an uninhabited planet.

"That's the way I photographed The Galapagos—with a big initial pan. In fact, The Galapagos has never been inhabited—not those nine islands. There was no architecture. I didn't want any."

The Galapagos—under the jurisdiction of the Ecuador government—is the only land shown on the film. The rest of the film is set at sea and Weir, guided by O'Brian's writings and by his own research, realistically shows shipboard life in 1805.

Does Weir think that the deep friendship between Captain Aubrey and the ship surgeon/naturalist, Stephen Maturin (Paul Bettany), can still exist between two men today?

"Under extreme circumstances, yes, probably in a military situation which this (story) is (about). It's possible in a war situation where desperate people can find themselves together. You'll probably find some members of troops in the recent wars, like the Gulf War, who made connections they would not otherwise have made in peacetime. There aren't anymore crews confined like that on a ship. It's hard to think of a nuclear submarine and imagine the captain and the first officer playing violin concerto. Maybe they do, but they'd probably play Jimi Hendrix."

Weir is, depending on an actor's attitude, notorious or famous for hating acting rehearsals. "When you cast well, you have good actors, there's not a lot of talk needed. If the actors are well prepared and you're well prepared, it just happens. So that's why I don't like rehearsals.

"Actors have been frustrated by what I do sometimes. They type up the floor, and say, here is the gun deck, the captain's cabin is over here, we are in these clothes. This is the scene and you take it up. I don't like doing that at all. I like to have the real shoot, the props, the clothes and the atmosphere, the feel of it. That inspires me and I think it does many actors. You can't help but act."

Weir believes in researching, though. Grisly medical procedures performed by Bettany's surgeon character, Maturin, for example, were studied by the actor before the filming commenced in Mexico and The Galapagos.

Weir says, "By the time Paul has to do the amputation, he's been to London and met surgeons. No rehearsals needed. Here's the boy lying before him. He must amputate. Here is the knife."

That co-writer John Collee is a doctor must have helped Weir execute these scenes with precision. Weir explains, "What I chose to show were operations illustrative of the doctor's skill beyond that of a regular surgeon—amputations, whatever—and that somehow these are inherently part of the story."

A great quality

Asked to describe his lead actor, Weir offers one of the best insights on Russell Crowe: "Unpredictability. A sense of danger which is the result of the unpredictability. You never quite know what he might do or what he might say. That, in an actor, is a fabulous quality. It's a great quality to have in a movie as well. Predictability is the death of a film in a way."

With his successful adaptation, will Weir mine the cinematic potential of the remaining 18 Aubrey-Maturin novels of O'Brian? Fans, as devoted as the followers of the "Harry Potter" and "Lord of the Rings" books, love these novels.

"I don't think I'm interested," says Weir. "I wouldn't really want to repeat myself. I've never done a sequel. I felt I did everything I wanted to do in this one. If it was a huge success, and they say would you want to do another one, it will be tempting to say yes because of euphoria. But with some exceptions, 'The Godfather' and 'Lord of the Rings,' I've often found the second or third ones to be less interesting than the first one."

On his way out, Weir tells INQUIRER Entertainment, "If you see Kuh and Bembol, would you send them my regards?"

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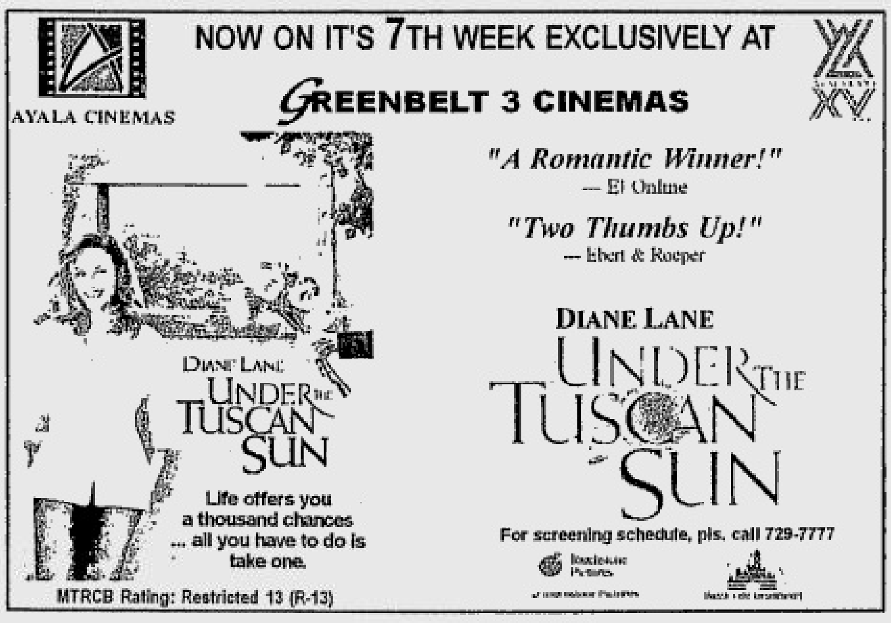
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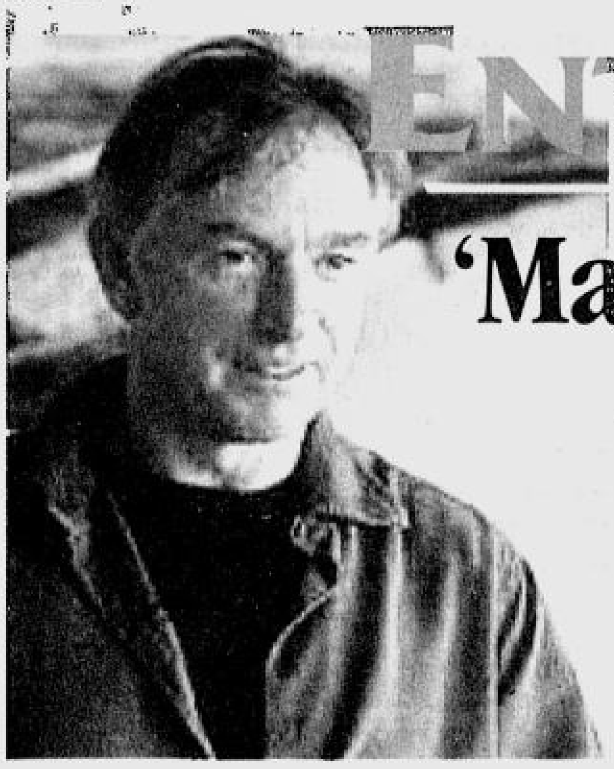

'Master' maker not interested in sequels

20 years later, Peter Weir remembers Kuh, Bembol

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA correspondent

LOS ANGELES—"And what about Bembol Roco, how is he?"

Bembol's name rolls clearly from filmmaker Peter Weir's tongue, pleasantly surprising INQUIRER Entertainment.

We had just asked Weir, who is earning the most lavish praise of his career with the epic adventure "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World," about filming "The Year of Living Dangerously" in Manila.

The director of such films as "Dead Poets Society," "The Truman Show," "Gallipoli" and "Witness" visibly perks up, eyes lighting up at the mention of his film in which Manila subbed for Jakarta circa 1965, during the collapse of Sukarno's dictatorship regime. Although silver-haired, Weir looks boyish at 59.

"It was a very creative experience, very stimulating," Weir says of shooting the 1983 film that starred his fellow Aussie, Mel Gibson, Sigourney Weaver, Linda Hunt, Bembol (in the role of Kumar) and Kuh Ledesma (Tiger Lily).

When we mention Kuh's name, Weir again looks eager and asks, "And does she still perform?" After we reply, he shoots another question, "Where does she perform?"

Then he inquires about Bembol. Upon learning that Bembol is still acting, Weir smiles and says, "Good."

We remark about his good memory. In his face we see how genuinely pleased and interested he is in hearing about Bembol and Kuh.

'MASTER'/C7

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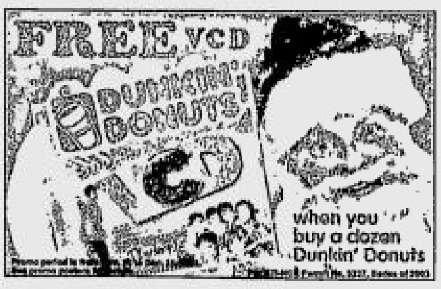
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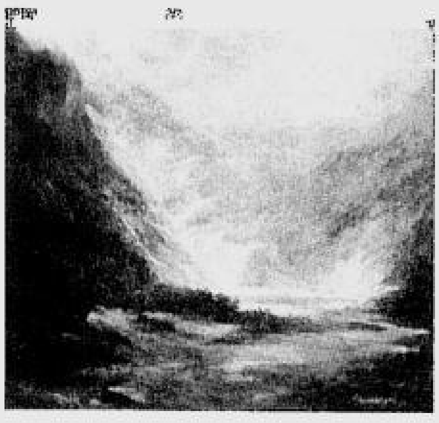
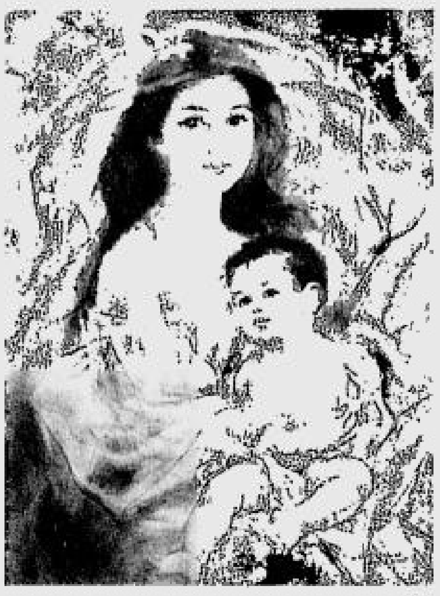
Art shows make a dash for finish line

The art scene takes on a Christmas-y glow, as galleries mount their usual year-end shows


"LIWANAG ng Pag-asa," by Omi Reyes


"HALIMUYAK," by Caloy Gabuco

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THE YULETIDE season, Philippine-style, has finally descended on the metropolis, judging from the mesh of colorful street décor and the endless throng of shoppers making a beeline to shopping malls and the ubiquitous *tiangges*.

The art scene has also taken on a Christmas-y glow, as art galleries mount their usual year-end shows, involving groups in the-more-the-merrier fashion, such as the Black Artists from Bacolod, Arte Pintura Group and Pintanaw.

Among them, Pintanaw, now on its 17th year and bigger than ever, with two new members to beef up its ranks, has mounted a show of new works (Gallery 828, Art Plaza, 4/L, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, until Dec. 15).

Staging a reunion of sorts at this time of year must have been impelled by the need to commune as a family of artists. There have been few occasions during the year wherein 14 artists of varied persuasions, not to mention addresses, could possibly get their act together.

Individually, many of the members have been on their toes doing commissioned works and joining art competitions, while coping with the demands of living and their muse. As with the ordinary breadwinner, artists cannot live by brush and paint alone. In these hard times, the work must be supplemented by a more rewarding—financially, that is—preoccupation.

Pushing the boundaries

Being essentially landscape artists, Pintanaw stalwarts like Lino Acasio, Antonio Bandalan, Eliezer Dimaculangan, Jimmy Kwong, Omi Reyes, Melencio Sapnu and Fidel Sarmiento contributed their recent oeuvre.

Though their works are continuing elaborations of their artistic concerns, there is something new in their attempt to push the boundaries of time and place beyond the normal confines of the genre.

Sapnu's "Redeemer," Sarmiento's "Boracay Scene" and Reyes' "Liwanag ng Pag-asa" may well augur a new phase in their respective careers, their technical virtuosity subsumed by the rich religious subtext of their images. The last-mentioned work is marvelous in its configuration of nature's own miracles, the sun's golden rays pouring down a valley like a scene straight out of Genesis.

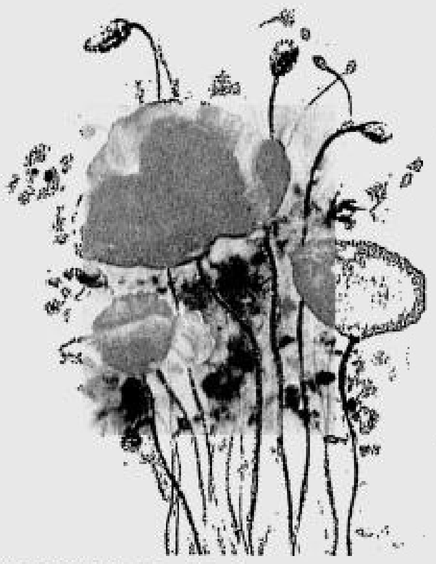
The Mother and Child iconic figure of which Caloy Gabuco, Robbie Nubla and Danilo Santiago have been identified with makes its *de rigueur* appearance in the show.

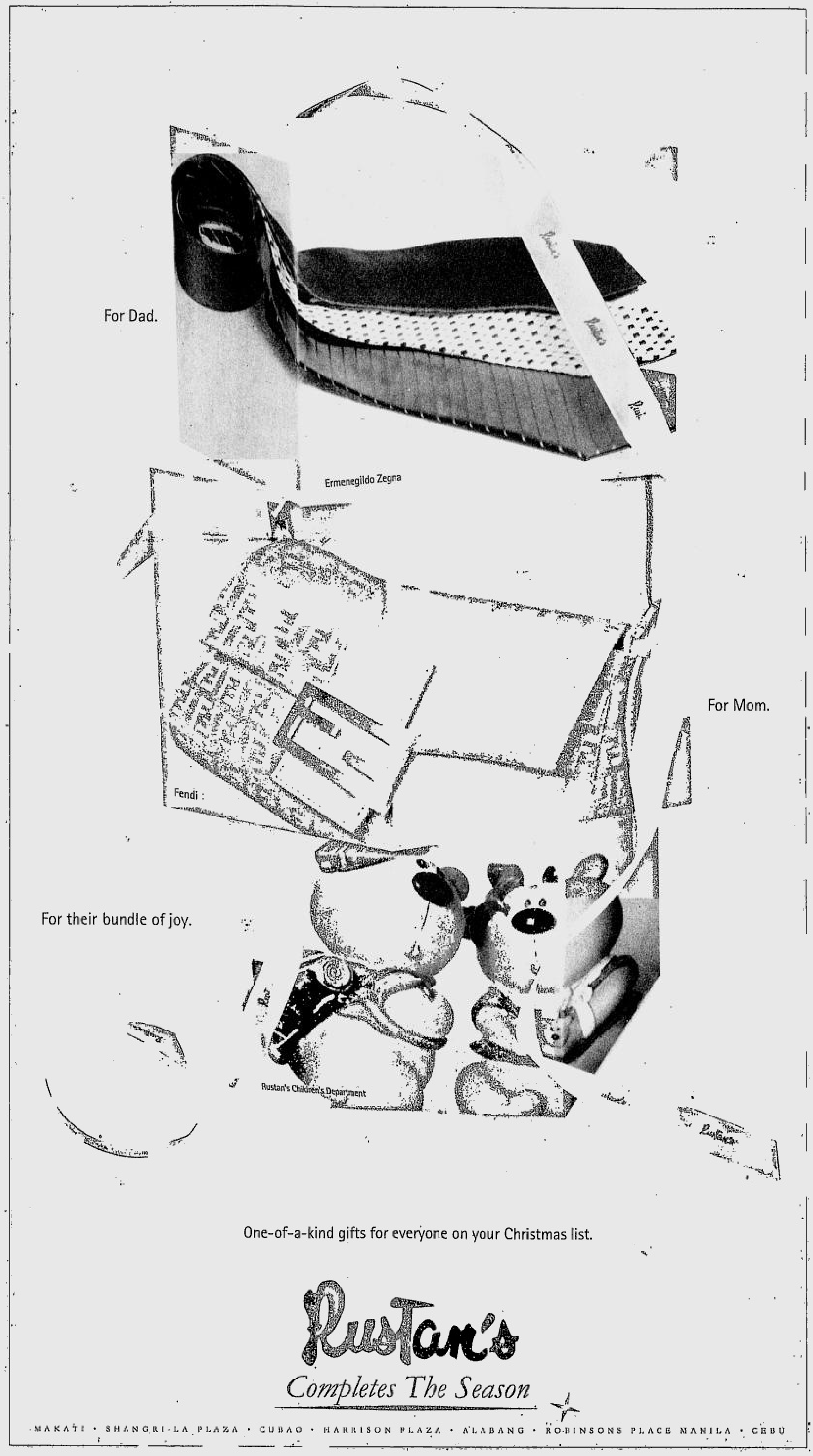
Gabuco is one of the most sought-after interpreters of the theme. His ethereal *mag-ina* in "Halimuyak" are once again delicately draped in diaphanous apparel and strewn with orchid blooms.

More contemporary Pinoy

Ditto with Santiago, a professor of Fine Arts at University of Santo Tomas, whose "Al-ab ng Ina" shows a willowy figure of a mother cradling her infant child. In contrast to Gabuco's rendering, Santiago's has a more contemporaneously Pinoy character.

ART/ D2


"POPPIES," by Fred Ramirez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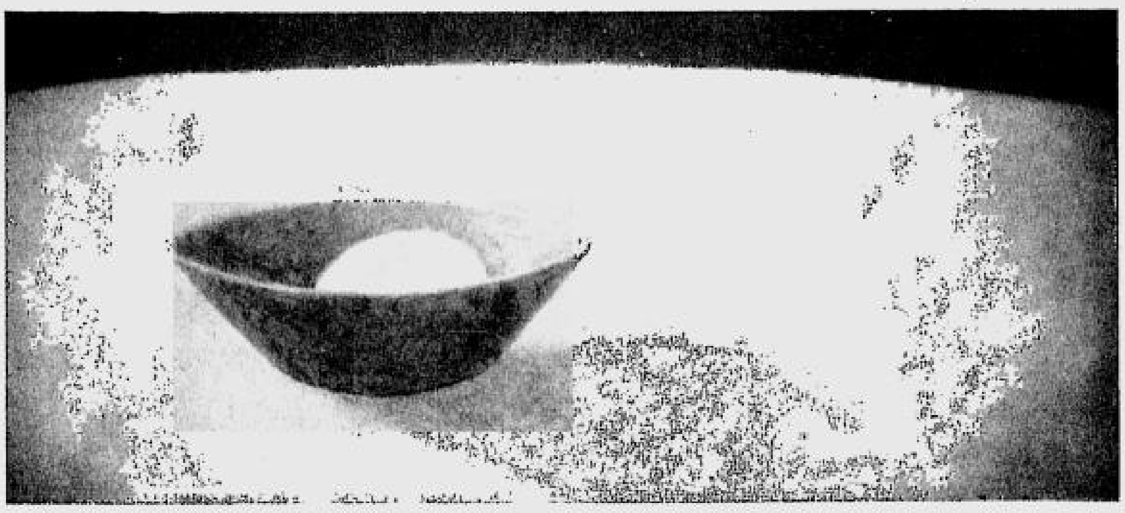
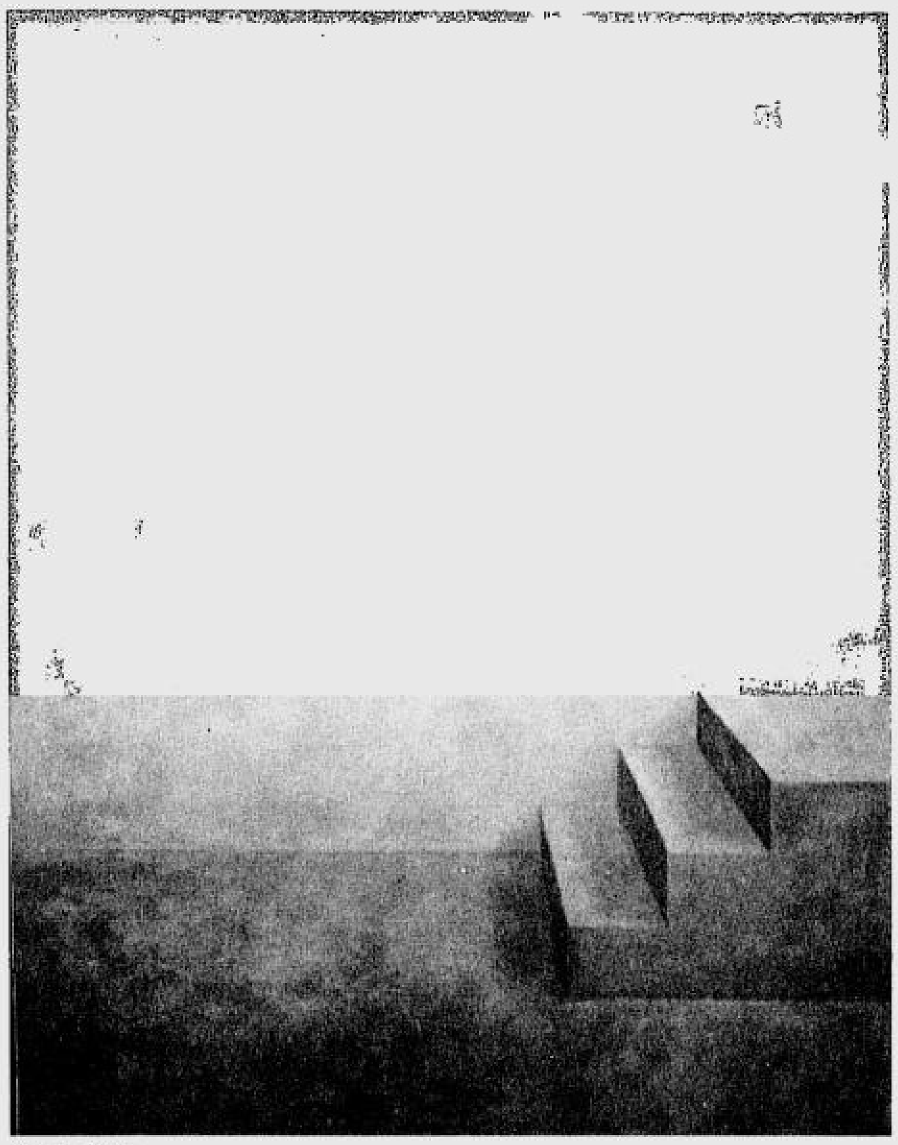

"EGG in a Bowl"


"LANDING"

The still life as poem

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE STILL life is perfect in itself. As such, one doesn't compare it with a landscape, a portrait or a historical tableau in degrees of seriousness, complexity or importance—in the same way that one doesn't compare a sonnet with an epic.

Thus, one doesn't compare which is the greater artist: the portraitist, the landscapist or the still-life artist. A Nena Saguil kitchen scene is just as perfect as a Fernando Amorsolo historical seascape.

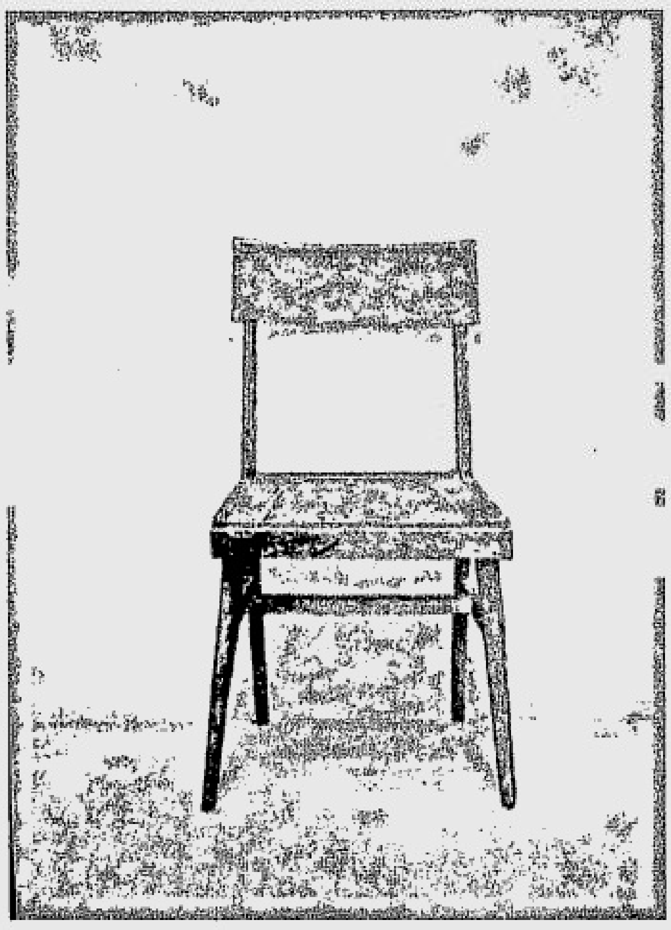
Usually a study in composition, the still life is a charming genre, modest with no pretension to high seriousness in art, though it can also be high art (witness the still lifes of Cézanne, Chardin, Sánchez-Cotán, Pieter Claesz, Frans Snyders).

Its subject matters may be limited, but its range of tones and themes is quite wide, actually. If you're looking for flimsy materials, there are your frothy florals. And if you want some gravitas, turn to the vanitas.

A serious approach to the still life is Erwin Leaño's exhibit "Objects and Spaces," six pieces in oil on canvas, until today in The Big & Small Art Co. at Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall.

Leaño studied both Visual Communications and Studio Arts in the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts. He belongs to the Antipolo-based group of artists Salingpusa, of which his brother Tony is a founding member.

He counts among his favorite artists Degas, De Chirico, Munch, Klimt, Picasso, Millet—and of the locals, Danilo Dalena, Elmer Borlongan, Lino Severino, Lao Lianben, Gus Albor, Anthony Palomo.


"CHAIR"

"Kahit papaano, may influence *din sila sa* work *ko,"* he says.

Study in brown

This exhibit closely follows Leaño's show "Figure," his monochromatic treatment of the human form consisting of closeups of nudes and body parts, held in nearby West Gallery a few months ago. For that show, he used a blend of raw umber and Prussian blue, producing a cool hue that's close to slate-green.

In this exhibit, the artist rigorously defines the subtle nuances, gradations and various tones of brown, produced by his subtle juxtaposition or precise blending of raw umber, burnt sienna, yellow ochre, cobalt-blue. This is often accentuated by a greenish tinge or gray shading.

The six pieces, awash in a warm monochrome tint, are studies in parallels and contrasts of straight lines and regular curves, and the relationships of objects to space and to one another.

Here, the still life retains its charm but the predominant atmosphere is one of gravity. Each piece is a study in composition, in structure, perspective, color tones, but the humble objects depicted are given such stateliness and balance that the viewer approaches each canvas with a kind of hush.

"Vessels" has two cylindrical ceramic receptacles studiously distanced from one another, while "Three" has two circular dishes and a blockish picture frame partially cropped out of the pictorial frame.

"Egg in a Bowl" is a clever piece of repeat forms. It layers curves upon curves, of the half-seen egg, the bowl's rim and base, and the table's edge.

Perfect geometry

"Jar" is a perfect geometry of lines and angles, surfaces and solids, points. And so is "Landing." The terra-cotta jar and the stone steps have been positioned in a low horizon and on one side of the respective pieces, and the rest of the canvas is filled up by the color planes of wall and ground.

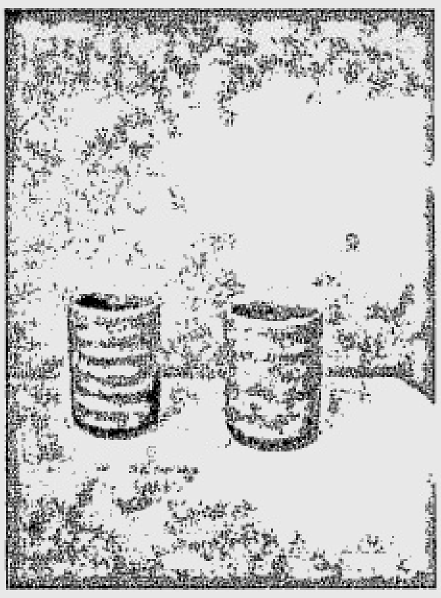
The artist says he particularly gives importance to the texture of the background. The bareness is meant to provide "resting space for the viewer's eyes."

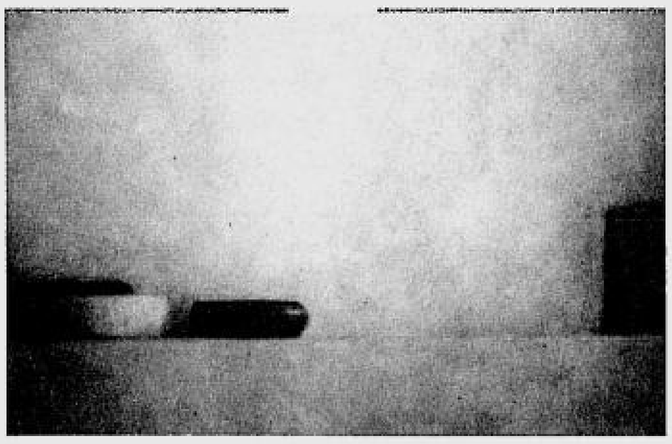
The technique is repeated in "Chair." But here the bareness of wall and floor seems to conspire with a strong light source overhead to harshly expose the forlorn furniture so that it appears too naked, as if it were a human form stripped to the skin and pushed to the wall, cowering in a corner.

Leaño seizes a common object and gives it the poetic treatment. He draws realistically and composes without gimmickry, such as violent juxtaposition or transcendental floating, but he sets these bare objects against bare wall, ground or table so that it gives the effect they're floating.

Leaño's art then is one of poetic realism. Seeing the world in a vase, bowl or bare wall is, of course, the stuff of poetry.

Such a serious appreciation of ordinary things often ignored by the sweeping vision indicates a deep apprehension of life. And here, in each piece, the still-life artist has created a perfect poem.


"VESSELS"


"THREE"

Fun and color at ceramic studio

SINCE the opening of the first Color Me Mine Philippines in Shangri-La Plaza Mall in 2001, a good number of people have flocked to this fast-growing paint-it-yourself ceramic studio to experience the "art of having fun."

Office executives and other professionals, show-biz personalities, political luminaries, famous athletes, established and upcoming artists, little kids, students and whole families take time out from their busy schedules to step into a new world of fun and color.

Color Me Mine is all about fun and enjoyment in expressing one's thoughts and feelings through painting on a ceramic piece.

Clients are not confined to any rule. The shop believes that whoever steps into it has an artistic talent waiting to be tapped.

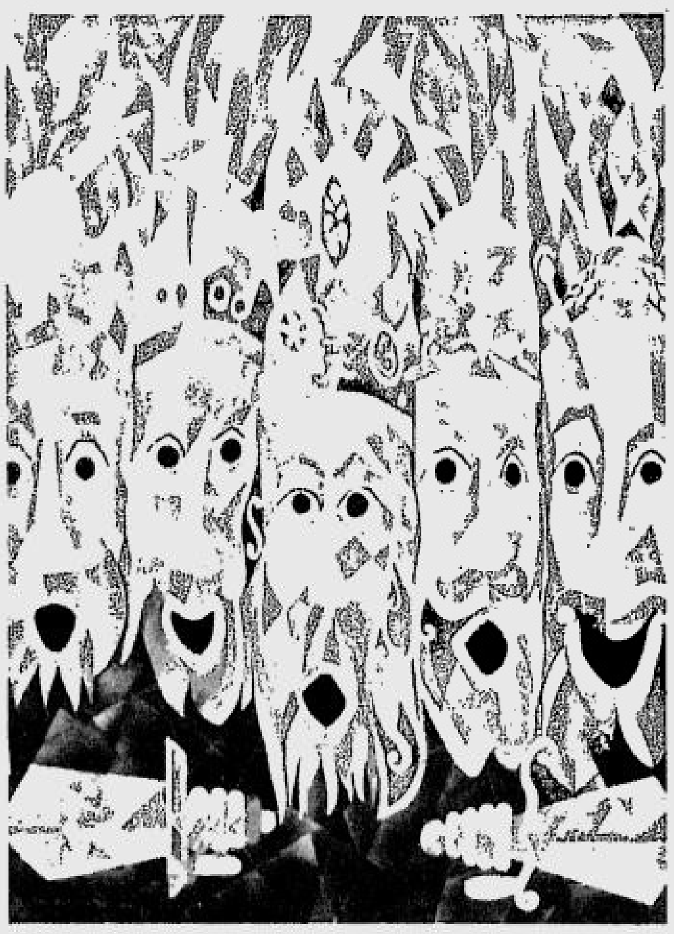
Painter and architect Bart Aguas, who has made Color Me Mine studio at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall one of his ateliers, attests that anybody can get inspiration from the many things that occupy our daily lives every day.

Aguas, who doubles as a teacher at the studio when he has time to spare, says that the heart and soul of a person are connected, and they move the hand to naturally paint straight and curved lines to form whatever that person desires to express through his or her art.

At Color Me Mine, every piece of painted ceramics becomes a labor of love for its maker. They cease to be mere items, and become mementos to be treasured.

Art shows make a dash for finish line

From page D1


"MORIONES," by Noel Catacutan

Salvador Convocar, the newly elected president of the Saturday Group, has his usual abstractionist image of curvilinear shapes intermingling with an array of geometric forms. "Rare Earth," the vertically mounted work, reiterates Convocar's preoccupation with a post-Industrial Age submerged in a sea of metallic chaos.

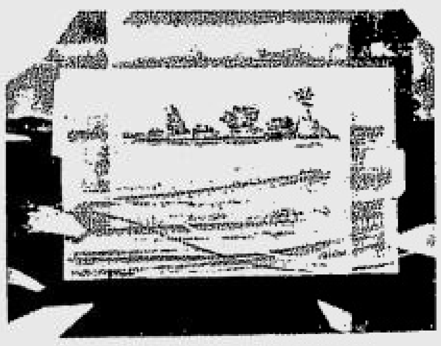
Fred Ramirez's "Cosmic Landscape Series" and "Poppies" are largely contrasting works but both showing the remarkable ambidextrous talent at work. The latter piece, with three varied full-bloom petals rising from squiggly stems, easily entrances with its seductive charm.

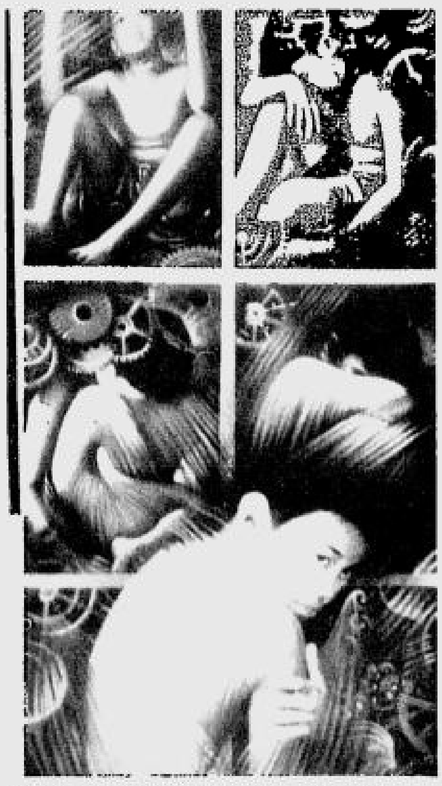
The two new recruits could have well infused new blood with their radically different approaches to figuration. Dems de la Cruz's "Sariling Yakap" is a probing series of portraits of a solitary young boy caught in the cycle of dream and reverie, emblem of the collective unconscious of a generation continually adrift in narcissistic pathos.

Noel Catacutan's "Moriones" is a mirthful interplay of the mask made famous by the annual Marinduque festival. Well delineated in the style of transparency-cubist aesthetics popularized by Manansala, the piece is as Filipino as the celebration that remains popular today.

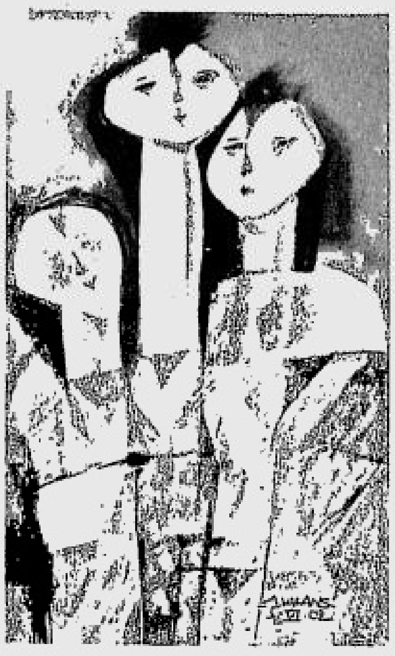
Indeed, just like the manner Filipinos celebrate Christmas—a confluence of historic roots, religion and revelry—slices of Philippine art can be viewed through the canvases of artists who have managed to retain their unique individuality while embracing the communal spirit.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

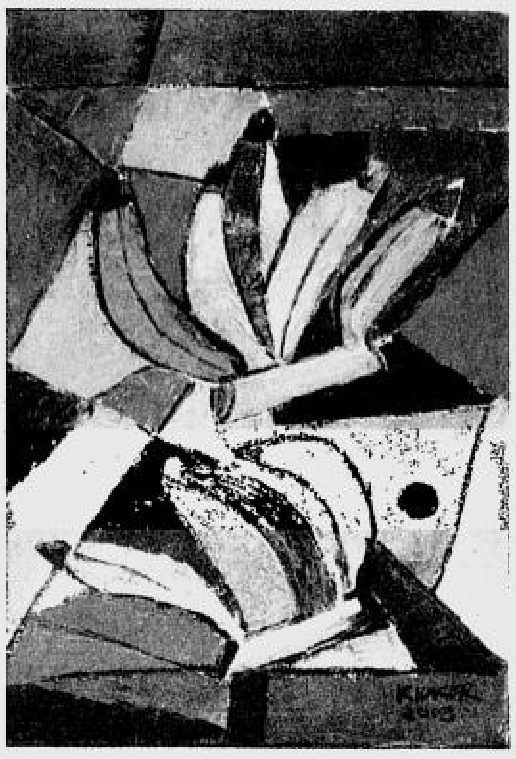

"BORACAY Scene," by Fidel Sarmiento


"SARILING Yakap," by Dems de la Cruz

SHEILA Nicolas Red is holding an exhibit of her photographs, "Maharlika," depicting urban Muslim Filipinos, in Pasig City Museum, until Dec. 20. Call 6410211.



"BANANAS," oil, by National Artist Ang Kiukok, at Finale Makati



MAURO Malang Santos will stage a one-man show in Gallery 828, Art Plaza, 4/L, Shangri-La Plaza, Dec. 18-31. Twenty works in oil, acrylic and gouache on women, the *nipa* hut and the Christmas lantern are featured. Call 6337851.

Ang Kiukok, Francesca Enriquez at Finale

VISUAL ARTS

THE PINTAKASI Artist Group of the Arts Association of the Philippines will hold its first major group painting exhibit, "Kami Na...Naman," on Dec. 11-31, at the Kanlungan ng Sining in Luneta Park. The exhibit is a collage of abstract and modern realism paintings and mixed media by talented Fine Arts students from different universities. Call 5369891.

THE BLUMENTRITT Group of Artists, Ad Infinitum Gallery and Galerie Astra will hold a raffle of artworks today in Galerie Astra, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Makati. Proceeds of the raffle will go to the Bantay Bata Foundation. Twenty-five tickets will be sold for P7,000 each and 25 works with prices of P15,000-P68,000 will be raffled off.

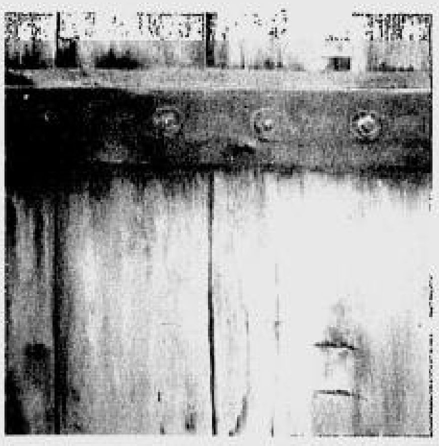
The works include those by Angelito Antonio, Norma Belleza, Roddy Ragodon, Hermes Alegre, Andi Cubi, Popoy Cusi, Nonoy Duran, Egai Fernandez, Jimmy Roque, Carlo Saavedra, Danny Sola, Gino Teoseco and Nestor Villanueva. Call 8951772, 7269015 or 7243032.

RECENT works by Negros Occidental artists Nunelucio Alvarado, Charlie Co and Dennis Ascalon are featured at the SM Art Center, SM Megamall Building A, Mandaluyong City, until today. The exhibit is dubbed "Raga-Ak: Black Artists in Asia." Call 6342410.

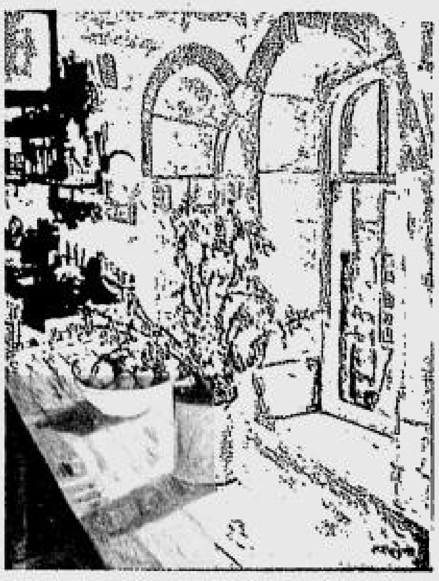
ARTIST Susanito Sarnete of La Carlota City, Negros Occidental, presents recent sculptures in the exhibit "Tianda," which pays homage to the vendors of various wares, food and fruits of La Carlota City. The exhibit is on view until Dec. 18 at The Drawing Room, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City. Call 8976990.

FINALE is presenting National Artist Ang Kiukok and US-based artist Francesca Enriquez in separate shows. Ang Kiukok is presenting his latest works at Finale Makati while Enriquez is unveiling recent paintings at Finale Megamall. Both shows run on Dec. 16-Jan. 4. Call 8151813 or 6342410.

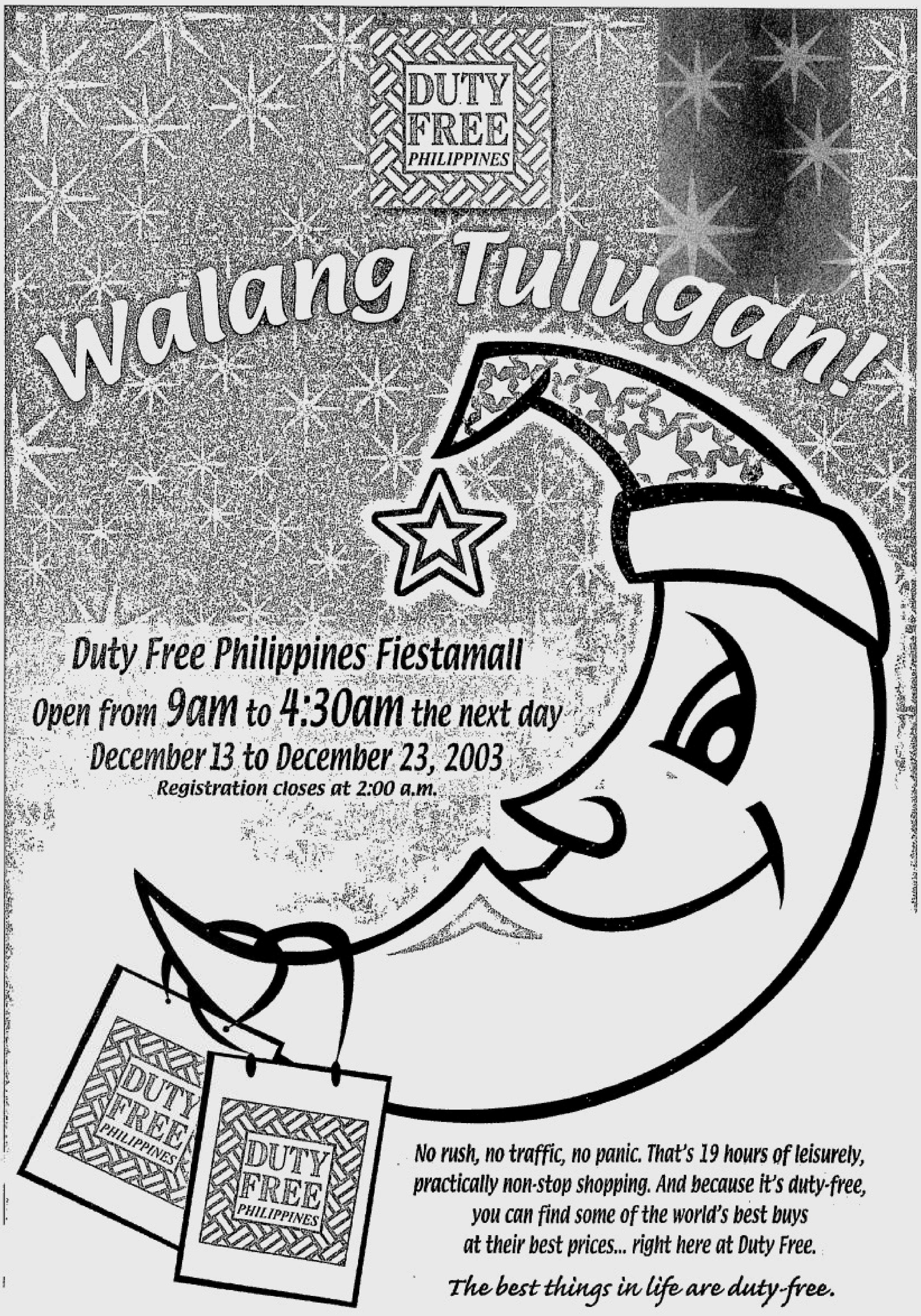
AN EXHIBIT by some 40 visual artists marked the 10th anniversary of Boston Gallery on Dec. 6. "Conceptions: Alay 7" is a gathering of various works in sculpture, painting, assemblage, drawing, photography, print and digital media—all presenting emergent creative and artistic ideas for Philippine contemporary art. The show brought together artists who have been part of the gallery's first 10 years. The exhibit runs until Jan. 14. Call 7229205.



"THE CHAPEL," by Tina Fernandez, at the Boston Gallery anniversary exhibit



"MORNING Light," oil, by Francesca Enriquez at Finale



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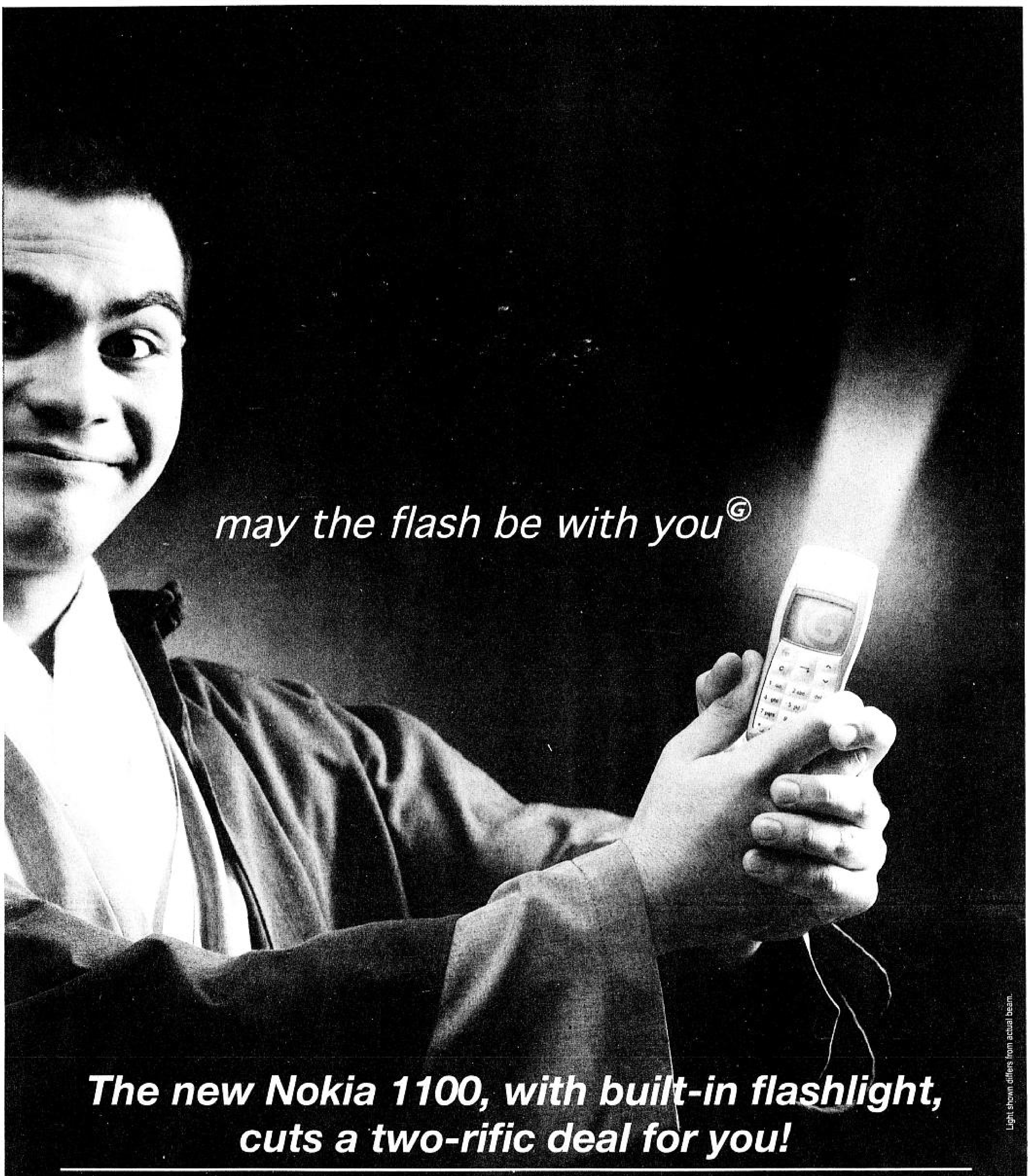
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ITALIAN piano virtuoso Francesco Fumarola

SOPRANO Rachelle Gerodias

MAESTRO Ruggero Barbieri conducting the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra

Concert celebrates Christmas and European unity

ITALIAN Ambassador to the Philippines Umberto Colesanti is hosting a major musical event on Dec. 18, 7 p.m., at the Meralco Theater, to mark the end of the six-month term of the Italian presidency of the European Union.

The event, dubbed "Concerto di Natale," will also double as a Christmas treat for music-lovers, as it will feature not only classical music but traditional Christmas melodies by the likes of Rossini, Puccini and Verdi.

The concert program has been put together by Maestro Ruggero Barbieri, the Italian music director of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra. The highlight is Beethoven's "Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Orchestra," the solo parts of which will be performed by teenage Italian virtuoso Francesco Fumarola.

Fumarola has earned rave reviews in concert halls in his native Italy, as well as in the United States, Germany, France, Hong Kong and South Korea.

The concert will climax with Friederich Von Schiller's poem "Ode to Joy," set to the glorious music of Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony, and sung by Filipina soprano Rachelle Gerodias.

The Ninth Symphony has been designated the national anthem of the enlarged European Union, with 10 new nations joining the league.

The concert, then, is essentially a celebration of European Unity. As Ambassador Colesanti explains, "It is intended as a celebration of the idea of a United Europe, as an example of a dream that can become reality and can be imagined and realized also in other contexts, both historical and geographical, for the progress of the people of the world."

"Concerto di Natale" is presented by the Italian Embassy in Manila, Rustan Department Stores and Supermarkets, Stores Specialists Inc. and Globe. Also lending support is Ralph's Wines and Spirits.

Ticket prices, at P500 (lodge) and P300 (balcony), are available at major National Book Store branches, Robinsons Department Store (Malate and Galleria), Tower Records (Makati and Alabang), Music Museum (Virra Mall, Greenhills), Ayala Center Inc. Greenbelt 1 Ticket Booth Cinema Lobby, Glorietta 1 Ticket Booth Cinema Lobby and on the TicketWorld web site www.ticketworld.com.ph. Call 8915610, 8969591 local 104 or 8952109.

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Geographical kin

Batanes and Lan Yu Island in Taiwan rediscover shared roots

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

THE BATANES Archipelago and Lan Yu Island are on opposite ends of the Bashi Channel where Pacific Ocean currents meet the China Sea. Sharing the turbulent sea establishes a strong geographic and environmental bond that unites the Ivatan of Batanes and the Tao of Lan Yu despite the international border that now separates them.

Ivatans and Tao share environmental, landscape and cultural similarities. Communication is easy. Each speaks a variation of the other's language.

They share a cuisine based on root crops and fish, weave the same types of baskets, construct similar weather-resistant houses, and sail on variants of the wooden boat called *tatayá* in Batanes and *tatalá* in Lan Yu.

They live on a chain of volcanic islands situated squarely on the worst part of the typhoon belt, often swept by torrential rain and strong wind, and perennially threatened by earthquakes.

Living in such a demanding environment requires a lifestyle in total harmony with nature, leading to the development of a defined set of environmental and architectural practices that reflect the distinctive culture common to Batanes and Lan Yu.

Both are lonely, isolated places that normally show as flecks at far corners of national maps. Weather is so unpredictable in the remote islands that travelers are often marooned.

True to the Batanes experience, there was a sudden cancellation of the flight meant to take the 26-member Batanes-Lan Yu Socio-Eco-Cultural Exchange Mission to Lan Yu. We were left with no option but to sail to the island on a boat provided by the Taiwan Navy.

The Ivatans were checking the direction of the wind, looking at the color of the clouds, and grew wary of the trip.

We non-Ivatans without any traditional knowledge to detect storm signals, had no idea of what was ahead. Like sheep being led to slaughter, we single-filed on the gangplank into the boat for the two-hour journey.

Unforgettable welcome

The farther we sailed from land, the bigger the waves became. Sometimes they were bigger than our boat. The promised two hours turned into four. Each member of the delegation turned into his own shade of violent green.

Knowing that our knees were too wobbly to stand, the people who waited at the Lan Yu dock greeted each of us with a long, steadying embrace. The introduction to Lan Yu is something that I will never forget.

We had gone to reaffirm Batanes-Lan Yu unity. Rep. Butch Abad of Batanes and his counterpart, Rep. Wallis Pelin of Taiwan, organized the Batanes-Lan Yu Socio-Eco-Cultural Exchange Mission that would sign the documents establishing the Batanes-Lan Yu Sustainable Marine Culture Project.

The agreement intends to create a sustainable management system for the contiguous marine resources of Batanes and Lan Yu, and to pass on shared history, language, culture and traditions to future generations.

Traditions have taken different paths to survival in Batanes and Lan Yu. Led by Congressman Abad and Gov. Vicente Gato, Ivatans now realize their identity derives from their unique environment and cultural traditions, and the only way to survive globalization is to plan their development based on traditions.

Traditions live on in Batanes, preserved by strong local commitment and political will. The entire province and its territorial waters are classified as a "Protected Landscape and Seascape" under the National Integrated Protected Areas Act, which prevents depletion of all natural and cultural resources, including landscapes and seascapes, marine life, flora and fauna, traditional villages, monuments, and archaeological sites.

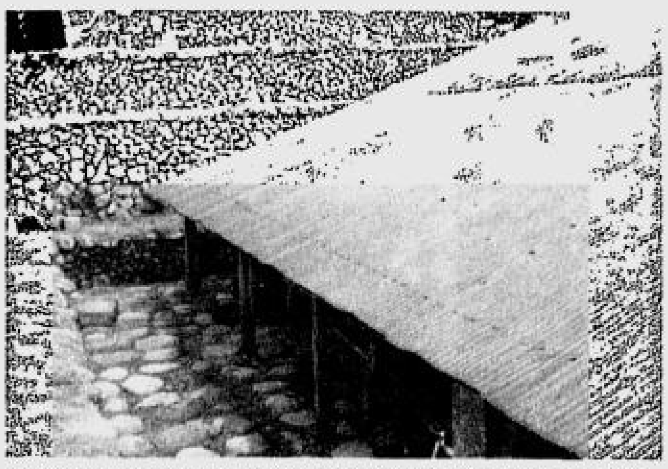
Recently barangays revived traditional Ivatan cooperative practices where volunteers participate in repairing each other's houses, public plazas, and religious buildings.

Cooperatives are reviving traditional construction techniques and using natural materials for repairing old houses; returning to natural lime to bind stone walls instead of using damaging cement; thatching roofs with cogon; and allowing the cutting of certain trees under DENR supervision for lumber needed for restoration of houses.

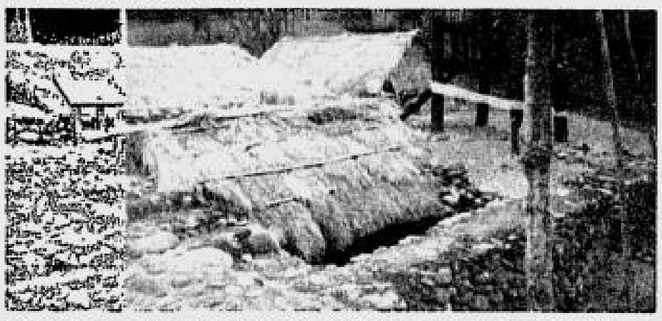
Barangays have established waste-management programs and stricter controls to preserve the environment.

Because he is one of the few Filipinos with intense pride of culture, the Ivatan responded positively to the preservation program.

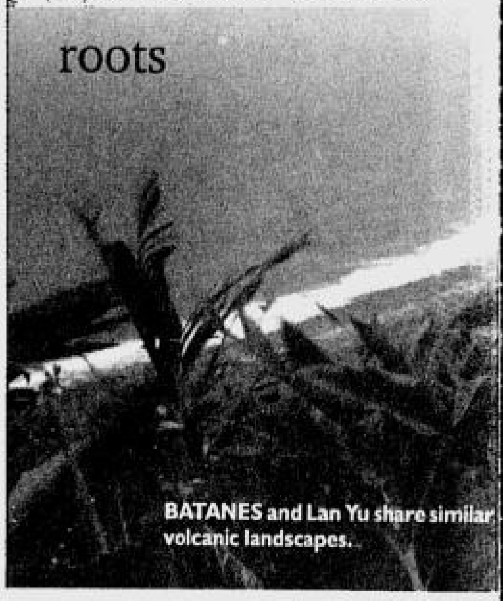
However, preservation seems to be the farthest thing from the Tao population of 3,536



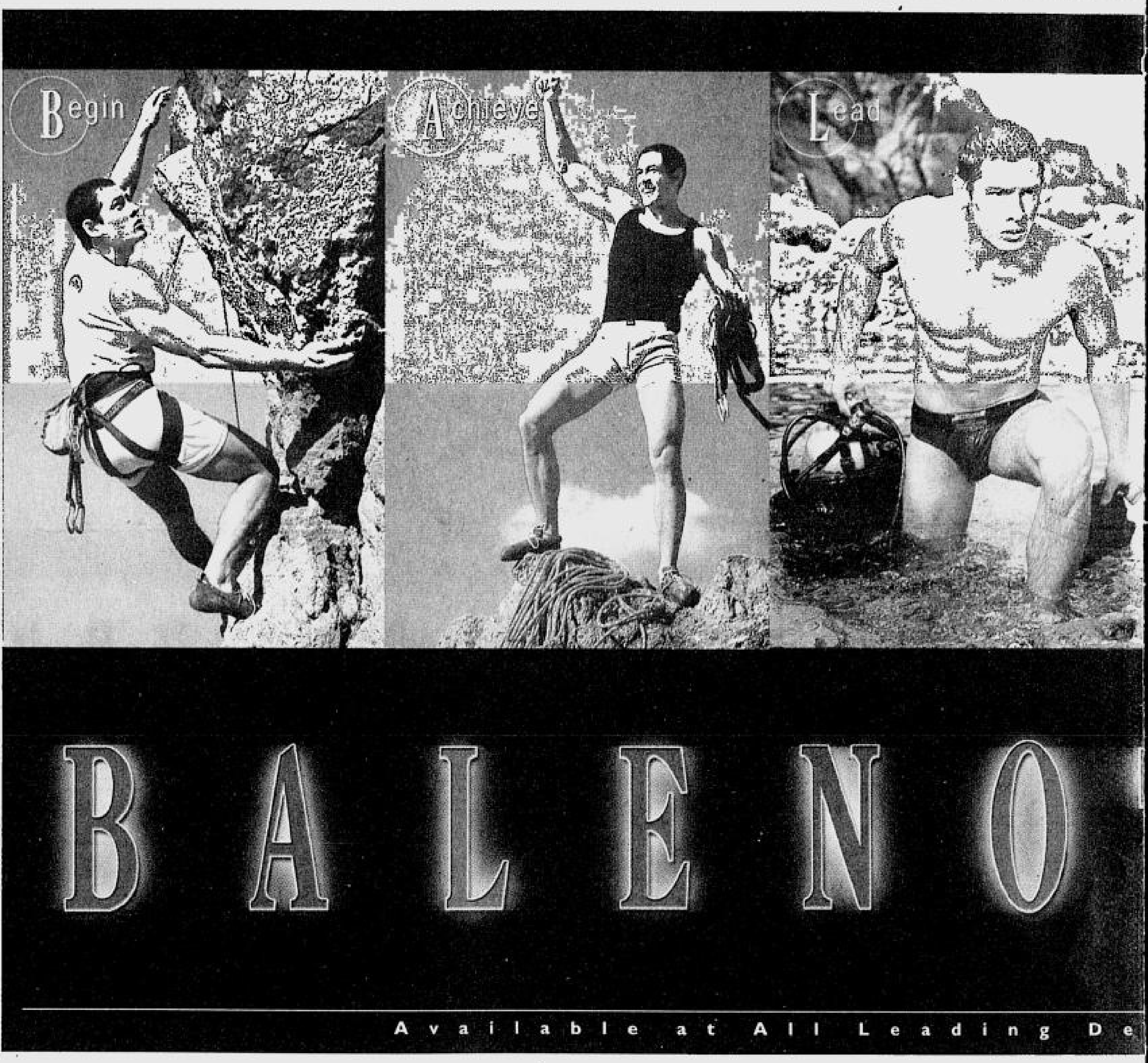
ALTHOUGH roofing sheets have replaced the thatch, the rest of the house remains traditional.



BUILT below ground and roofed with thick cogon thatch for wind protection, the traditional Lan Yu house is an early version of the present Batanes house.



BATANES and Lan Yu share similar volcanic landscapes.



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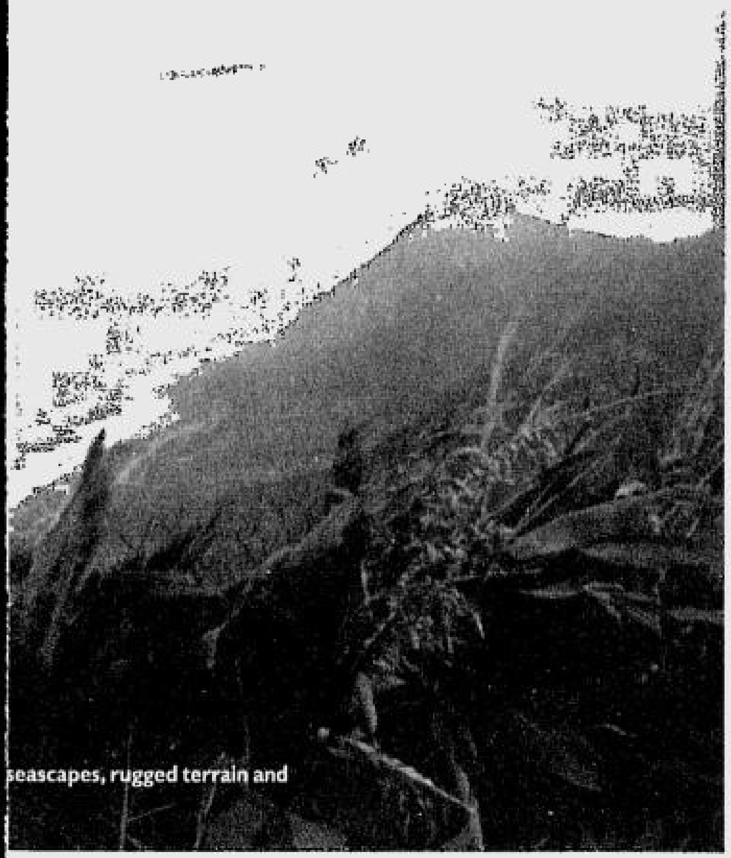

seascapes, rugged terrain and

UNRESTRICTED development permanently damages the magnificent Lan Yu landscape.

souls living in six villages along the coast of small Lan Yu island which measures 45 square kilometers when the tide rises to its fullest.

Lan Yu is developing rapidly. A newly completed highway circles the island. Another will soon bisect it. People have moved out from traditional homes into boxy two- or three-story concrete houses whose façades are clad in tiles like practically all the other houses in Taiwan.

It looks like all new construction was done in a frenzy within the recent past, as Lan Yu rushed to update itself to what it understood to be Taiwan development standards.

They looked at the wrong development models. Nobody in Lan Yu thought of planned development, so everything went haywire. Now villages look like bad copies of congested Taiwan towns, inappropriate urbanism set down by mistake in a breathtakingly beautiful rural seaside landscape, a mistake that cannot be reversed.

The development frenzy sealed Lan Yu's fate, burying its traditions forever under cement and white tiles. Like their new architecture that is totally inappropriate to their environment, the Tao saw progress as homogenizing with the dominant Taiwanese Chinese culture.

Distressing

Distressingly few cultural markers remain. Language will probably disappear with the older generation. Crafts are practically gone. Traditional costumes are identical, looking suspiciously like uniforms designed and sewn up by a central authority for distribution to the natives.

Nobody wore heirloom gold or clothing from earlier generations. Down to the plastic bead jewelry, everything was so depressingly new.

Culture has been relegated to the visitor performance level. Songs and dances had a generic feel to them. Nothing felt authentic.

There is no shortage of education facilities. A large, modern grade-school building sprawls at the edge of private playing fields complete with track ovals. The student population is 48.

An equally modern vocational school campus constructed with Japanese cooperation provides computer labs for future technicians, a state-of-the-art restaurant kitchen for future chefs, and drafting facilities for future architects. All the equipment are new.

Everything is new in Lan Yu. Familiar sputnik lamps are being installed along the just completed highway. Streets in villages, no matter how narrow, are concretes. A spaghetti of wires fly overhead. A water distribution system has just been installed.

Power and water are free. Vehicles pay no registration fees. The municipal government budget for infrastructure and projects overflows into hundreds of millions of Taiwan dollars (NT$34-US$1). Development is everywhere.

Life has to be good in Lan Yu.

Quietly inserted into a deserted cove with its own well-protected dock is the Taiwan nuclear-waste dump. It has been there for 22 years, and in all that while residents' repeated protests have fallen on deaf ears.

They are constantly reassured of the safety of the facility, but we were told that stomach cancer is now the most common cause of death in the community. Could life be that good in Lan Yu?

Life is good in Batanes. The strong Ivatan pride of place and pride of culture keeps traditions alive. Things that matter to the Ivatan are still the way they have always been.

People take care of each other. Elders teach their children the same Ivatan values that their parents taught them. The young respect their elders.

The feel in Batanes continues to be authentic. Development establishes a better environment from where Ivatan traditions can continue.

The Tao should come to Batanes to see how development based on maintaining traditions makes for a better life.

E-mail your comments and feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com

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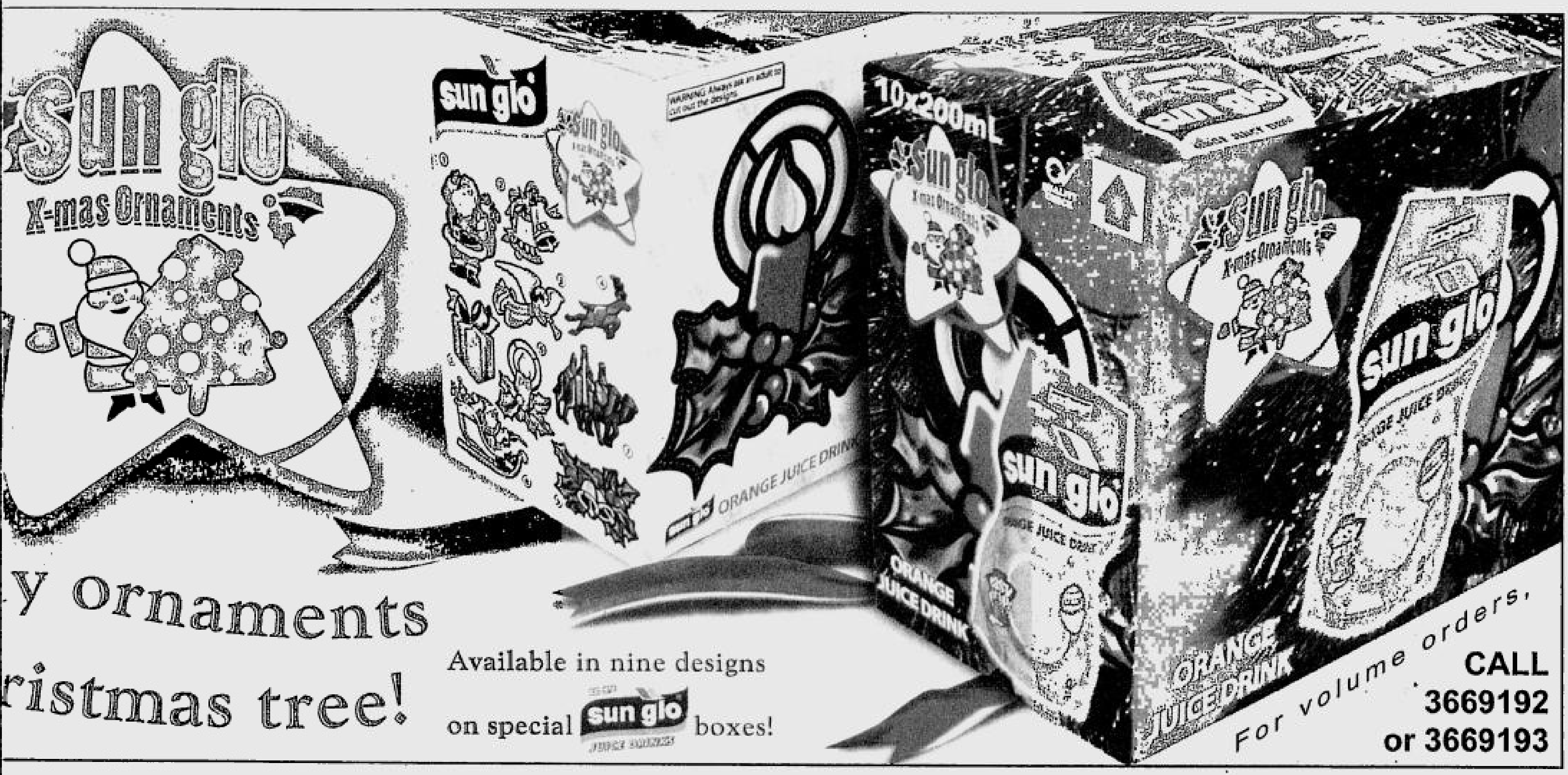

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St. Scholastica, peaceniks adopt schools

By Butch Hernandez
Contributor

ST. Scholastica Academy (SSA) Bacolod City, run by the sisters of the Benedictine order, tries to give down its students an educational foundation with a strong sense of nationalism and deep-seated Christian values.

On the other hand, the Paghili-Usa sa Paghida-et Negros or PsPN (Unite for Peace Negros) aims to promote a culture of peace among the youth of Negros.

A few months back, the Foundation for Worldwide People Power sent its program officer, Emilie Karen "Ayen" Tolentino, to Bacolod City to spur the Education Revolution there.

Both St. Scholastica Academy and PsPN responded immediately because they both saw the Education Revolution was a great way for them to practice what they preach.

Together, St. Scholastica Academy and PsPN adopted the Mandalagan Elementary School and the Doña Corazon Montelibano Elementary School, both in Bacolod City.

SSA directress Sr. Lucy Togle, OSB, signed an adoption Memorandum of Agreement with Mandalagan ES principal Sonita Libo-on and principal Marie Lynda Nacario of the Doña Corazon Montelibano ES.

Lulu Tison and Lina Hilado of the PsPN also signed the agreements.

FWWPP president Butchie Lim-Ayuyao and this writer were in Bacolod City for the occasion.

ST. Scholastica Academy directress Sr. Lucy Togle, OSB

Sister Togle said SSA's adoption program for Mandalagan Elementary School included catechism classes, which it had been conducting every Thursday since July.

Recently, the school started a clinic for football, a very popular sport in Negros Occidental. Sister Togle added they had gone on medical missions for Doña Corazon ES in Purok Hervias II, as well as conducted seminars on leadership and group dynamics.

Meanwhile, Lulu Tison said the PsPN was designing a program to equip public school teachers with "a peace perspective."

Tison said they aimed to provide "the cognitive tools, skills and techniques and attitudinal perspective needed to effectively mainstream the peace dimension in their respective content areas."

Peace issues still resonate in Negros Occidental, which has seen more than its share of social unrest.

DR. Emmanuel Y. Angeles, vice chair of the Angeles University Foundation board of trustees and president of Clark Development Corporation

Mandalagan Elementary School has 1,399 pupils and 37 teachers while Doña Corazon Montelibano ES has 1,611 pupils and 52 teachers.

Boosting IT instruction

Noted educator Dr. Emmanuel Y. Angeles inaugurated recently the Centers for Computer Literacy of Pandan Elementary School, Don Clemente Dayrit Elementary School and Salapungan Elementary School, all in Angeles City.

The Centers for Computer Literacy is a joint Education Revolution project of the Angeles University Foundation (AUF) and Clark Development Corporation (CDC). Dr. Angeles is also president of CDC.

Loreto Canlas, AUF president, said AUF and CDC renovated one room in each of the three public schools and provided 20 computer units, air-conditioner and a library.

However, the Centers for Computer Literacy project goes beyond just equipment donation.

Together with the hardware, Canlas said the AUF College of Computer Studies was giving computer literacy sessions for selected teachers of the three public schools. It was also conducting seminars on language proficiency and environment preservation.

She added that they also had a continuing Introduction to Computers program for pre-schoolers 4-5 years old.

Very soon, each of the three public schools will be growing a herbal and botanical garden.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Angeles said one of the major thrusts of CDC and AUF was to contribute significantly to community development through projects like the Centers for Computer Literacy.

"We believe it is incumbent upon us to provide assistance especially to public schools, which are tasked with the important role of preparing our youth to become responsible citizens of the future.

"In the future, we look forward to providing more assistance to public schools not only through donations of equipment, but also through human resources development as well. Our public school teachers need continuing professional education in order to deliver quality instruction.

"As the saying goes, 'you cannot give what you do not have,' hence, it is a must they sharpen the saw in order to be effective and efficient," Dr. Angeles said.

The author is the executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

Search on for International Young Publisher of the Year

THE BRITISH Council has launched a new award for International Young Publisher of the Year, which will culminate in glittering ceremonies on March 15 with Cherie Blair as guest of honor.

The Philippines joins Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Nigeria, Lithuania, Poland and India in a bid to strengthen future leaders of the publishing industry through international experience.

The British Council Manila seeks to identify somebody from the publishing industry (widely defined as publisher, agent, book retailer, or distributor, but not an academic nor a writer) to represent the Philippines in the competition. He or she must be under 35.

The successful candidate will be sent to the United Kingdom from Feb. 29-March 17, 2004 to visit Scotland, Wales, and other regional publishing centers in order to understand how the industry works across the UK.

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Those interested should submit their comprehensive resumes on or before Jan. 9 to the British Council at the 10/F, Taipan Place, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, or e-mail Susan.Arcega@britishcouncil.org.ph

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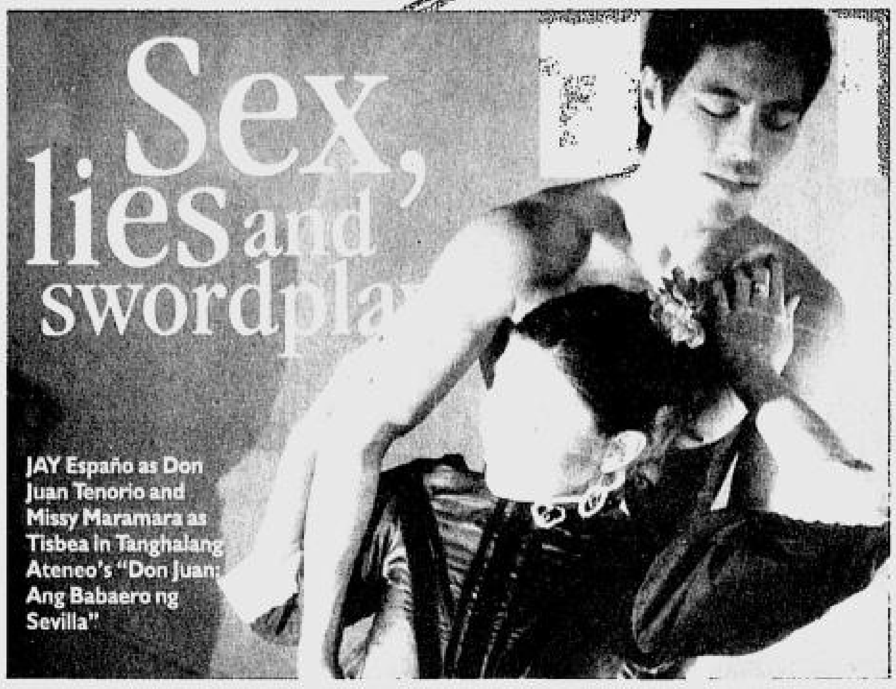
LIFESTYLE

Sex, lies and swordplay



JAY Españo as Don Juan Tenorio and Missy Maramara as Tisbea in Tanghalang Ateneo's "Don Juan: Ang Babaero ng Sevilla"

By Walter Ang
Contributor

Molina's 'Barber of Seville' is recast in the vernacular, highlighting age-old questions about mores and manners

IN THE 1600s, there was no television, radio, Internet, or MMS-capable cell phones. So it's not surprising that the *comedia* (which referred not to comedy, but to a drama or play) performed in public squares and marketplaces was all the rage.

It was easy to please audiences then with clear-cut portrayals of good triumphing over evil with plays such as Tirso de Molina's "El Burlador de Sevilla y Convidado de Piedra."

But in this day and age of MTV images and techno-gadgets, how can a centuries-old morality play about a womanizing leach who gets his just desserts catch and sustain the attention of the audience?

Tanghalang Ateneo attempts an answer with "Don Juan: Ang Babaero ng Sevilla," a translation by Salvador Malig Jr.

First, it brings in National Artist for Theater Design Salvador Bernal, who then creates a false proscenium for the humongous stage of the Irwin Theater on the Ateneo campus.

Covering almost a third of the stage, Bernal's façade focuses the action toward the center. In this set, there are motifs of wings and an ominous all-seeing eye high above the stage, a celestial counterpoint to the devilish treachery that eventually unfolds onstage.

Then, director Ricardo Abad fills the space with lots of action. The Tanghalang Ateneo moderator and artistic director regales the audience with dancers darting in and out of scenes, singers punctuating the drama, and actors who have very large movements and walk about a lot as they scream their lines.

As Don Juan conquers one woman after another and sidesteps the consequences each time, Bernal's large set pieces move about to create different locales.

Three large curtained walls and two stair sets become the interiors of a house, the side-

SEX/F2

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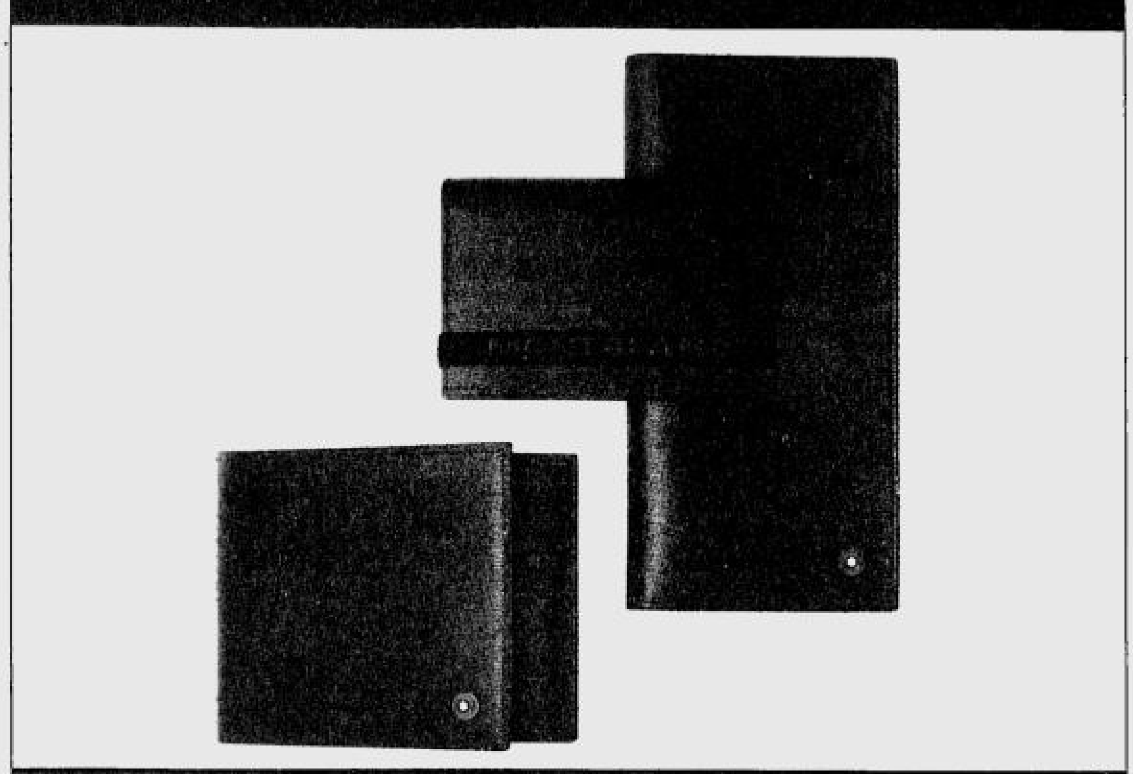

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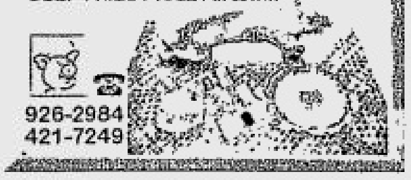

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Grand dame gets her due

'Salamat sa Musika' was a fitting tribute to Maestra Andrea O. Veneracion, National Artist and founder of the world-renowned Madrigal Singers

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

THERE could not have been a more fitting title than "Salamat sa Musika" for a musical revue held in honor of National Artist for Music, Maestra Andrea O. Veneracion, the country's grand dame of choral music.

The homage was given on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Philippine Madrigal Singers (PMS), which Veneracion founded in 1963.

Indeed, it was her compelling passion for excellence in choral music that made her a towering figure in the musical concert stage both locally and internationally.

When she was named National Artist for Music in 1999, the nation formally recognized her many achievements that catapulted the country into international recognition.

When she bagged the award, it was just a couple of years after the PMS had won the 1997 Grand Prix European de Chant Competition in Tours, France, reputedly the Olympics in choral competition.

Even before this, Maestra Veneracion had led the PMS in garnering top prizes in many international competitions, in places such as Spittal, Austria; Arezzo and Gorizia, Italy; Neuchatel, Switzerland; Debrecen, Hungary; Varna, Bulgaria; Tolosa, Spain; and Marktoberdorf in Germany.

Of course, the distinguishing mark in all these performances is the Veneracion touch that had not tarnished all through the years, and had, in fact, intensely glowed to the full.

The choir she has led, composed of around 20 choristers each time, has changed its members so many times, yet its sterling quality, described as "the most beautiful sound on earth," has been kept intact all this time.

It was because the venerable maestra had breathed unwavering excellence into the choir that it became unmistakably her very life. Sound musicianship, firm determination and perseverance, and, above all, her motherly touch conjoined to make the PMS an excellent choral ensemble.

Auspicious

The musical revue held in her honor was not limited to just a choral production, but was a total musical show, which made it doubly enjoyable.

Ryan Cayabyab's "Salamat Ina," composed in honor of Veneracion, was an auspicious opener. It was followed by the alternate singing of the current PMS and the composite choir made up of former members of the PMS from the 1981, 1989 and 1997 batches, with Mark Anthony Carpio leading the current batch.

The numbers rendered were lifted from the repertory of songs the Madz had sung in competitions. Unmistakably the tonal production carried the luminous stamp of choral eminence.

NATIONAL Artist Lucrecia Kasilag

A moving portion was the "Saludo Kami," when the maestra's daughters, Chiqui, Peachy and Diday, and her granddaughter Emmanuelle, poured out their hearts singing pop songs.

These women gloriously affirmed the saying "The fruit does not fall far from the tree," as they each proved to have rightfully taken after Maestra Veneracion in musical talent.

Former Madz singer Arnel Ignacio broke the seriousness of the presentation with his comic antics, tossing his lines with convincing wit and intelligence and bringing the entire house to raucous laughter.

To make the production complete, choreographed numbers of Tony Fabella were handsomely executed by Ballet Philippines.

The Streetboys impressed the audience with their acrobatic dancing. When the two groups fused their talents to interpret "Sampa Na sa Rampa," the number was simply arresting.

The finale, "Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas," conducted by composer Willy Cruz himself, and assisted by some musicians from the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, was a telling allusion to the continuance of choral excellence.

Indeed, Maestra Veneracion has done her part in blazing the trail for choral excellence in this country, which has made choral singing a part of the living musical tradition.

Such a tradition surely must not come to a stop. Rather, it must continue to reverberate to bring the eternal joy and beauty of choral music to this land and beyond.

The Philippine Madrigal Singers will perform on Dec. 18 at the CCP in "Breath of Christmas," a show organized by the CCP and the Rotary Club of Pasay Silangan for the benefit of the UP-PGH Pediatrics Ward. Call 8321125 for tickets.

MAESTRA Andrea Veneracion with CCP president Nestor Jardin

NOT all the scenes in the play are large and noisy; the production provides studies in contrast with light, intimate moments.

Sex, lies and swordplay

From page F1

walk of a street, and a whole menagerie of other settings. These pieces do not move automatically as you would see in an expensive Broadway production. But they cleverly fall into place "mano-matically," as local theater practitioners put it endearingly, manually operated by the cast hidden in the shadows.

Cheeky exposure

With all these bulky components helping literally move the action along, we also have a very hunky Jay Españo playing Don Juan.

Don Juan is, after all, a sexual fiend, so there are plenty of scenes where Españo takes off his shirt to reveal his pecs and six-pack abs glistening in the light. To the delight and muffled shrieks of the ladies in the audience, there is even one scene with some "cheeky" exposure.

Unraveling the sexual undertones of the script does not end there. We have fights between the men with their long, stiff swords. Not the usual clumsy swordplay one sees onstage, though; these actors pull off believable scenes under the guidance of fencing master Walter Torres.

Then we have the layered costumes of the women, also designed by Bernal—cumbersome silhouettes that Don Juan's sneaky words melt to reveal the wearer's inner but very real sexual desires.

And, of course, we also have sex scenes choreographed by Dexter Santos. Highly acrobatic, we see Don Juan dragging his ladies all over the stage and ending up in some very contorted positions.

Contrasts

If there is a hunky leading man for the women, the men also get treated to beautiful leading ladies.

If you keep your eyes open, you can catch the Reese Witherspoon lookalike in the chorus, as well as the sterling Missy Maramara as one of Don Juan's victims, the fisherwoman Tisbea.

Maramara's throaty voice commands attention as she delivers her feisty and earthy monologues. When Tisbea realizes Don Juan's deceit, Maramara erupts like a volcano and lets loose a fire-and-brimstone speech complete with cheerleader choreography.

However, not all the scenes are large and noisy. The production provides studies in contrast with light, intimate scenes.

Fun moments are courtesy of the comic timing of Ogie Alcasid sound-alike Christian Verlarde II, playing Markes de la Mota, and Joseph de la Cruz, playing Don Juan's sidekick/conscience Catalinon.

In the scenes where Don Juan preys on his women, the set design is usually detailed and busy, mirroring his flowery and twisted lies.

In contrast, when two women left miserable by his duplicity air their grievances, the stage is stark and empty. Just like a heart betrayed, it is filled only with blinding white anger.

This anger builds into a collective force near the end of the play when the victims come to collect from Don Juan. One is then led to ask, Is the anger justified?

Don Juan openly breaks the rules of conduct and civility to act on his lust. The women, however, must break rules in secret to act on theirs. If they are all breaking rules, anyway, is it really just a matter of not getting caught?

Is the question, then, just a matter of personal free will versus social obligation? Will a 17th-century play lead a 21st-century audience to ask, paraphrasing the title of a cable TV show: Whose morality is it, anyway?

Call Tanghalang Ateneo at 4266001.

E-mail the author at waltzang@mail.com.

Science City is also a cradle of arts

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

ON its third charter anniversary, the Science City of Muñoz in Nueva Ecija celebrates not with science-related activities but art-oriented events.

Muñoz is one of the few places in the country where the cultural renaissance is led by the mayor (yes, the Science City does not need an arts council where factionalism—not love for the arts—is the order of the day).

Mayor Nestor Alvarez led the city's celebration of its anniversary. The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra and the city's 100-member choir joined soprano Rachelle Gerodias in a mass singing of Christmas carols last Friday.

The University of the Philippines Concert Chorus participated in the festival of voices last Saturday, and on Dec. 12, the Philippine Ballet Theater took part in an event called "Sayaw ng Bayan."

What I find unique about Mayor Alvarez's cultural initiative is that appreciation for the arts is not limited to the city's elite. Last August, when I brought Cecile Licad for the first time to Central Luzon, I noticed the attendance was dominated not by seasoned music aficionados but by barangay captains and their constituents.

That first Licad recital in Muñoz had a cosmopolitan setting at the Philippine Carabao Center conference hall but a barrio fiesta look, especially during the reception. That was the first time I saw Licad rubbing elbows with barangay officials.

Even the mayor's household help—who prepared an excellent spread for guests—got a command performance from the pianist in a newly renovated upright piano.

For all its unlikely affinity with the arts (this is a science city, remember), the performing arts thrives in Muñoz, a classic example of how the arts relate to various sectors in the countryside. Mayor Alvarez is showing that art is definitely not only for the elite.

The mayor admitted it was difficult at first, but as audiences grew and appreciation increased, the Muñoz folk realized the arts could actually enhance the quality of their lives.

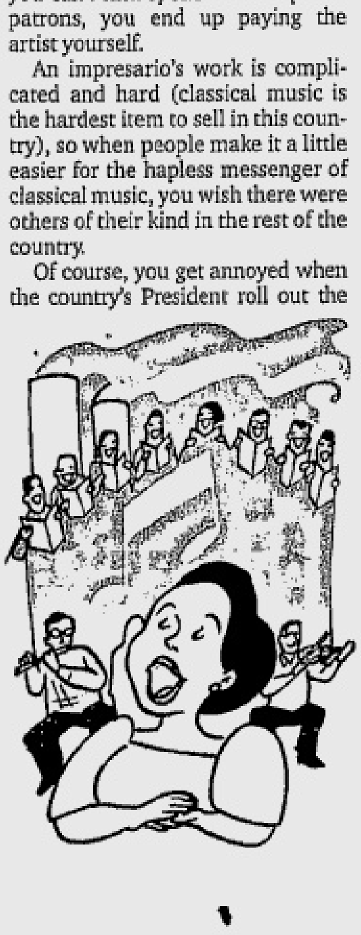
Here, the arts are not a status symbol; it is part of their day-to-day existence.

Last August, I got frantic text messages from Licad fans in Cebu, Bacolod and Davao asking what I was doing in Nueva Ecija and why I dared skip their turf when they had seasoned music-lovers awaiting the pianist just as eagerly.

Well, in the Science City, you don't have to persuade the top official to have live classical music in their territory. In other places, you hardly see town and provincial officials attending concerts, and you have to beg for sponsorship. When you can't find sponsors and special patrons, you end up paying the artist yourself.

An impresario's work is complicated and hard (classical music is the hardest item to sell in this country), so when people make it a little easier for the hapless messenger of classical music, you wish there were others of their kind in the rest of the country.

Of course, you get annoyed when the country's President roll out the red carpet for the likes of Jerry Yan and Mandy Moore and, at the last minute, skip a Licad concert after presidential dogs had sniffed for bombs at the Philamlife Theater. You get irritated when the President skips a gathering of the country's leading scientists to attend the premiere night of a Carlo Caparas movie.



But in Science City, the classical artists reign supreme. They don't have to compete with Moore and Yan, and, well, Caparas.

Here and there

The ordeal of violin prodigy Babes Saraza in the hands of organizers of the National Music Competition for Young Artists or Namcya (certified musicians from the UP College of Music), when he played with a Casio portable piano, did not end in Malolos, Bulacan. It also happened in Guiguinto town and other outreach destinations.

The situation worsened when the Casio piano stopped working and the poor violinist had to play the Romero arrangement of "Sa Kabukiran" a capella.

If the organizers were not musicians, you could forgive the oversight. But with doctorates in music, they should have been the first to know a violin needed a decent upright or baby grand and not a toy piano. Namcya has a budget for everything except for piano rental and a piano tuner.

Opera singer slain

Another recent victim of violence was a Tsinoy businessman who was an opera singer. Anthony Uy was shot, along with his driver, by men on motorcycles after withdrawing money from a Mandaluyong bank. He passed away three hours after the shooting, but the driver survived.

Uy sang Pinkerton in the concert version of "Madama Butterfly" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in the early '80s under the baton of the late Redentor Romero. I last heard him sing in the wake of Maestra Mercedes Matias Santiago in June.

Pinoy Pop 101

By Cecille C.A. Balgos
Contributor

REVIEW

EVEN its soft-cover edition has a very un-masa price tag, but then "Pinoy Pop Culture" (*Bench/Suyen Corp., 2001*) apparently is not meant for slipper-shod Pinoys who live and breathe the book's contents. Rather, its target audience seems to be those who have more time (and money) in their hands to indulge in regular, attacks of identity crisis, especially those among the youth (to whom the book is dedicated) who are enthralled with the West and barely notice what their own country and people have to offer.

And so acclaimed fictionist and essayist Gilda Cordero-Fernando and co-author M.G. Chaves take them on a wild and merry tour of everyday ka-Pinoyan, giving their astute observations in a mishmash of English, Tagalog and swardspeak, in short, urban Pinoy lingo that ensures accessibility and little misunderstanding.

The trip has five main stops: the Pinoy's penchant for imitating whatever or whomever it is he admires, down to the last detail; his packrat and *halo-halo* tendencies; his ability to makeover almost anything to suit his own needs; his pop icons; and his ingenuity that stems mainly from his perennial lack of resources.

Each of these sections is made up of mini essays and anecdotes that reveal the Pinoy in a way so loving and so hilarious that even the most irritating of quirks becomes almost endearing. Indeed, the book is so successful in celebrating the Pinoy for everything that he is, warts and all, that the reader is almost tempted to break out singing "Lupang Hinirang" after finishing it. At the very least, it will leave one with a sudden hankering for Chocnut.

Fernando and Chaves cover a lot of ground in "Pinoy Pop Culture," discussing music and other art forms, food, modes of transportation, religion and even gender, among a great many things.

Ever wonder how the Santo Niño became everyone's favorite little boy of worship? Or why the Pinoy seems to be a jack-of-all-trades and master of none? Or why Dolphy remains the country's No. 1 comedian?

Tita Gilda and Tito Manny explain it all to you, and then some. And while their lively text is already entertaining by itself, it is enhanced all the more by the works of some of the country's best artists and photographers, along with the art direction and layout of M.G. Chaves.

Still, even those with 20/20 vision may be seeing double after trying to read the parts in which the text is in white against a red or blue background. Very good lighting is also advised for those attempting to read the anecdotes in black text on red background (the upshot is that they will be rewarded for the effort).

Published by the local clothing chain Bench, the book admirably makes only minimal references to its very commercial backer. It also makes no pretense to being scholarly, which is rather apt for something on pop culture.

But perhaps there should have been more double checking done on some of details offered, such as Darna supposedly antedating Wonder Woman. According to the book, Darna was created by Mars Ravelo in 1947. Wonder Woman, however, first came out in 1941 (although some comics aficionados insist it was 1942) and was even well known for battling Nazis.

There has also been some debate on whether a Filipino, Agapito Flores, was, indeed, the inventor of the fluorescent bulb, something that the book lists as fact. It would have been helpful to, at least, mention the debate, even if the author, who cites the "Almanac of Pinoy-Indio Genius" by Kidlat Tahimik as the source of the detail, was convinced it was indeed a Pinoy genius who invented the lighting fixture.

But these are mere quibbles. In all, "Pinoy Pop Culture" does the Pinoy proud while at the same time making him conscious of his faults and his ability to improve himself.

As the book puts it: "For only in knowing our *ka-Pinoyan* can we see the root of all our problems. But also that their solution can only spring from the same creative source."

Pass the *butong pakwan*, please.

"Pinoy Pop Culture" is available in major Bench stores.

Leonor Rivera against the feminist cliché

From page D4

RUSTICA Carpio directs the play.

recting the play, and who performed Leonor for Montano in the '50s.

"It was my first role in the legitimate theater," Carpio said.

It was through this play that Montano met his wife Purificacion.

"I was a school teacher. I went to Philippine Normal University, Philippine National College then, for my master's degree in music, and I heard of his production," Purificacion remembered. "Everyone else was complaining of going home late, and he asked for someone who had no boyfriend or husband. I fitted the bill."

She played the role of Tia Carmen, Rivera's aunt, and romance between the playwright and the actress developed even after the performance.

Ambivalence

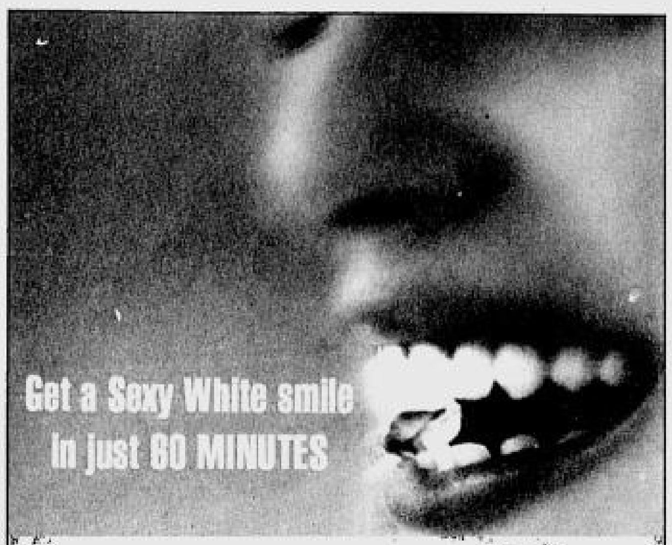
Montano put someone who was always on the edge at the center and gave her serious reverence befitting a genius.

Rivera was an exquisite singer and pianist apart from being brilliant in needlework. But more than that, she was a lady who knew how to celebrate womanhood in grand fashion, spirited but controlled, fiery but pure.

The ambivalence of Leonor Rivera was rooted in that great fight where she had to confront the formulaic warfare of society—and survived. Rivera did all that several decades ago, and it might be an appropriate refresher for women in this day.

When chivalry is dead (or comatose), it is good to be reminded that love is the paramount force.

"The Love of Leonor Rivera" will be staged at the FEU auditorium on Jan. 22, 10:45 a.m.; and Jan. 23, 3:15 p.m. Call 7364897.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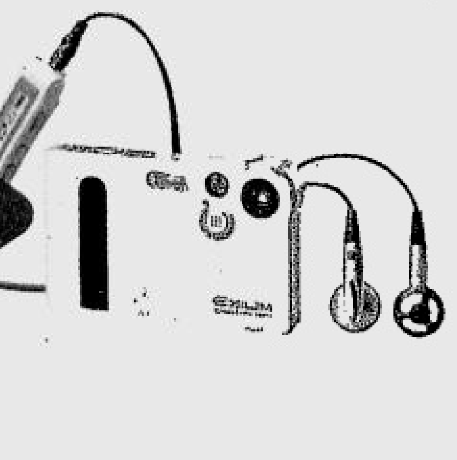

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IN THE story conference on "The Love of Leonor Rivera," cast and university officials discuss the play: (from left) Arnie Macapagal (playing Don Antonio Rivera), MassComm student Nathalie Wee (Leonor Rivera), associate dean of nursing Glenda Arquiza (Doña Silvestra Rivera), director Ruth del Rosario (the maidservant Doray), former associate nursing dean Preciosa Sapitula (Narcisa Rizal), dean Miriam Garcia (Soledad Rizal), FEU president Dr. Lydia B. Echauz, Purificacion Banaag-Montano (the playwright's widow), Rustica C. Carpio (director), dean Danny Cabulay (Jose Rizal), registrar Ann Margaret Santos (Doña Victorina), faculty members Babsy Morabe, Reggy Figer and Gloria Asis-Mendoza (Chenggoy, Henry Kipping and Dowager, respectively)

Leonor Rivera against the feminist cliché

FEU is set to stage Severino Montano's unique feminist play

By Irene Andrea C. Perez

THERE is too much emphasis on femininity—on what a woman can, should or must be—even as feminists scream women empowerment all over the metropolis, even as the archetypal Maria Clara becomes a mere phantasm.

In his celebrated novels "El Filibusterismo" and "Noli Me Tangere," national hero Jose Rizal depicted the orthodox Filipino woman as a saccharine lady. Refined almost to perfection, she will never be loud or cranky. She will always be reserved, all peaches and cream.

Rizal prefigured the character of Maria Clara among the women he was associated with, such as Segunda Katigbak and Nonong Valenzuela, but a large fraction of her can be attributed to his greatest love, Leonor Rivera.

Now, there is one-sidedness here, as people often interchange Maria Clara and Rivera. There may be a slim distinction between the fictional and historical, but it must be made clear, however, that Maria Clara is only a part of Rivera.

National Artist for Theater Severino Montano aimed to clarify this in his piece, "The Love of Leonor Rivera," which he wrote in 1954. Through it, he bravely put Rivera on the foreground.

In his notes on the play, Montano said writing about Rivera was "both a problem and a challenge. It was necessary to break down the false legend built around this beloved national figure and to destroy the Pollyanna qualities which marked her as a bloodless, inane representation of Filipino womanhood."

Rivera is much more commanding than the flimsy Maria Clara. From age 15 until she passed away at 26, she vowed to endure agony but not without a fight. Despite her parents' shrewd efforts to keep her away from Rizal, she never gave up the passion of loving him, even after her arranged marriage with Charles Henry Kipping, an English engineer who built the railroad from Dagupan to Bayambang.

Leonor, the lover

It might be a case of loving too much for Rivera, as she vowed never to sing or play the piano again after the wedding. She became ill and wished for death. Such intensity is the beauty of this woman whose ultimate driving force was love.

"The Love of Leonor Rivera" has been performed countless times, as the tragedy never fails to bring newfound respect for the woman lover.

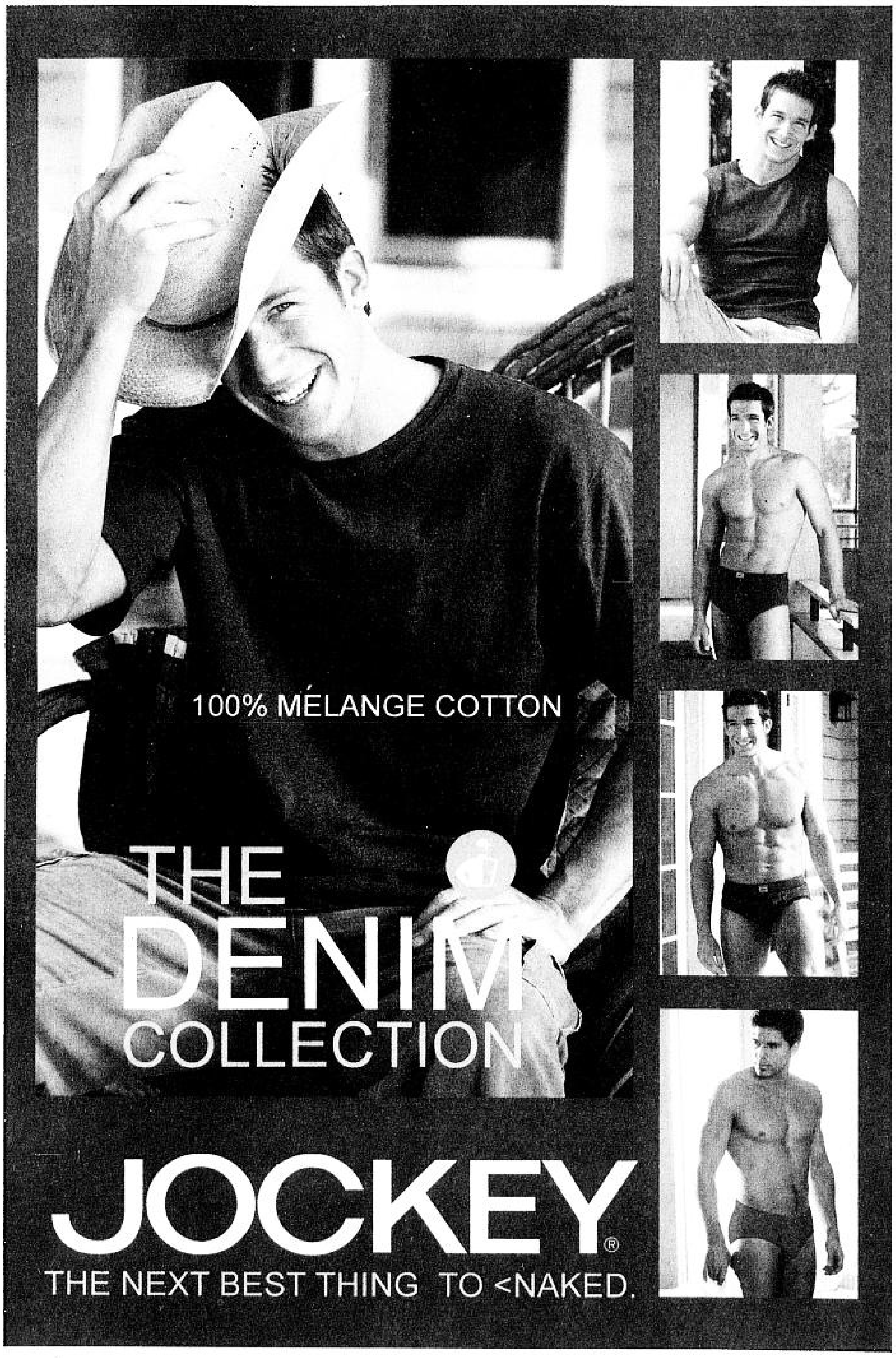
Next month, the Far Eastern University President's Committee on Culture, headed by theater veteran Rustica Carpio, will stage the play.

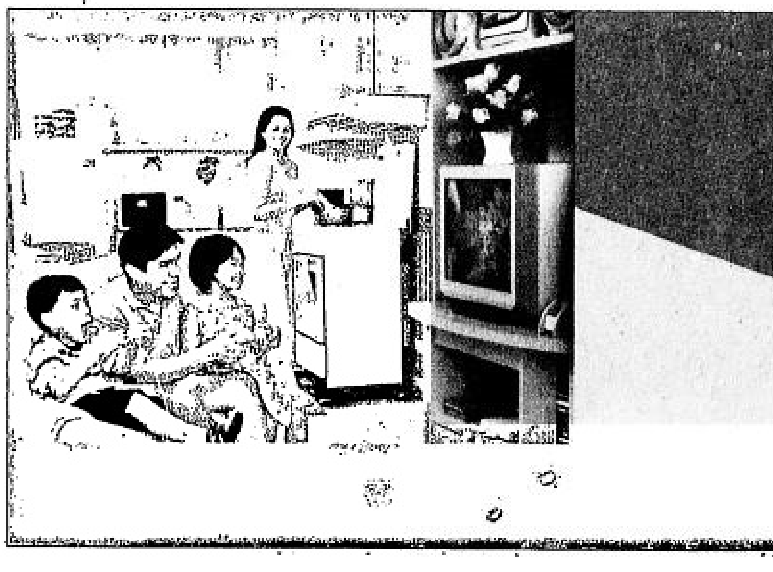
This is a rather sentimental project for Carpio, who will be di-

LEONOR/ D3

NATIONAL Artist Severino Montano

LEONOR Rivera (right) with her mother Silvestra Bauzon

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LIFESTYLE

Clash of the titans, MTV style

Gantimpala's song-and-dance 'Grethology' focuses on the heroism, and not the horrors, of Greek epics

Story on page G2

ITS Saludo alternates with Jinky Llamanzares as Medusa.

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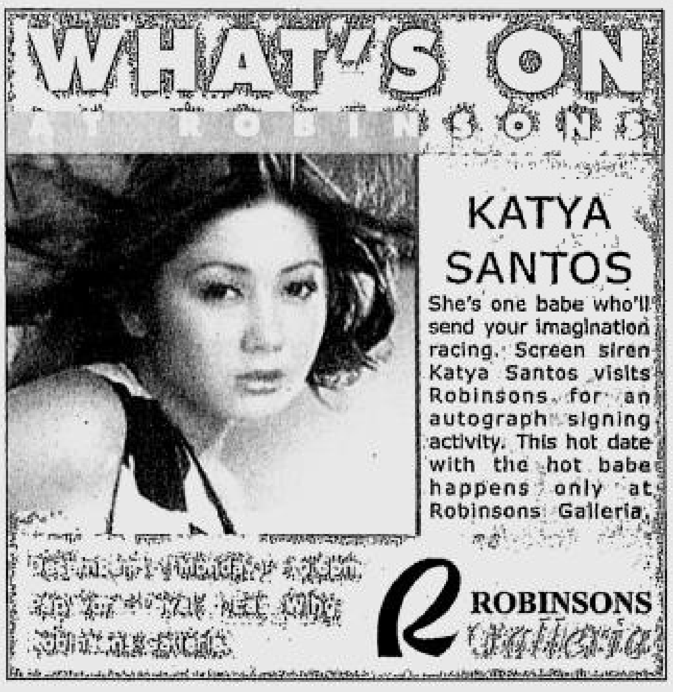

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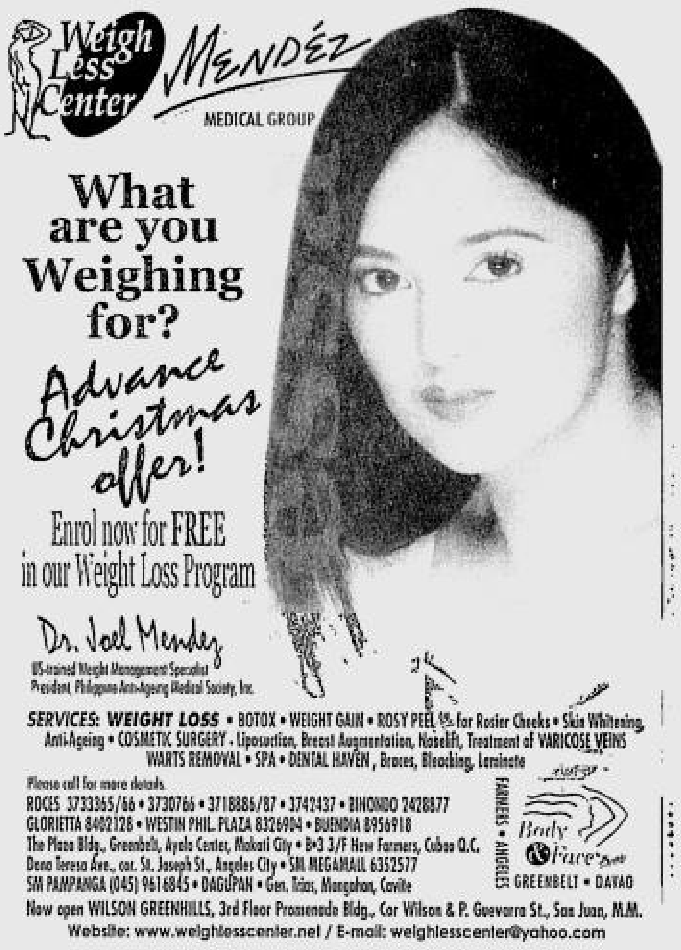

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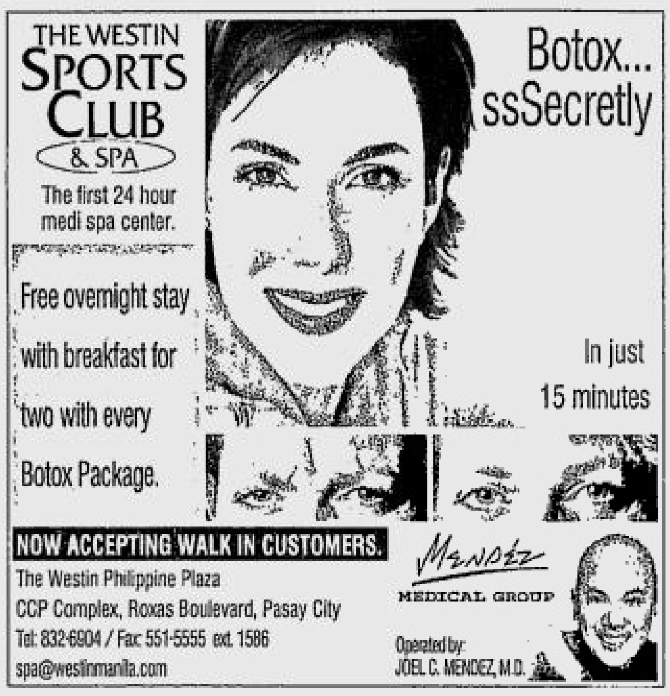

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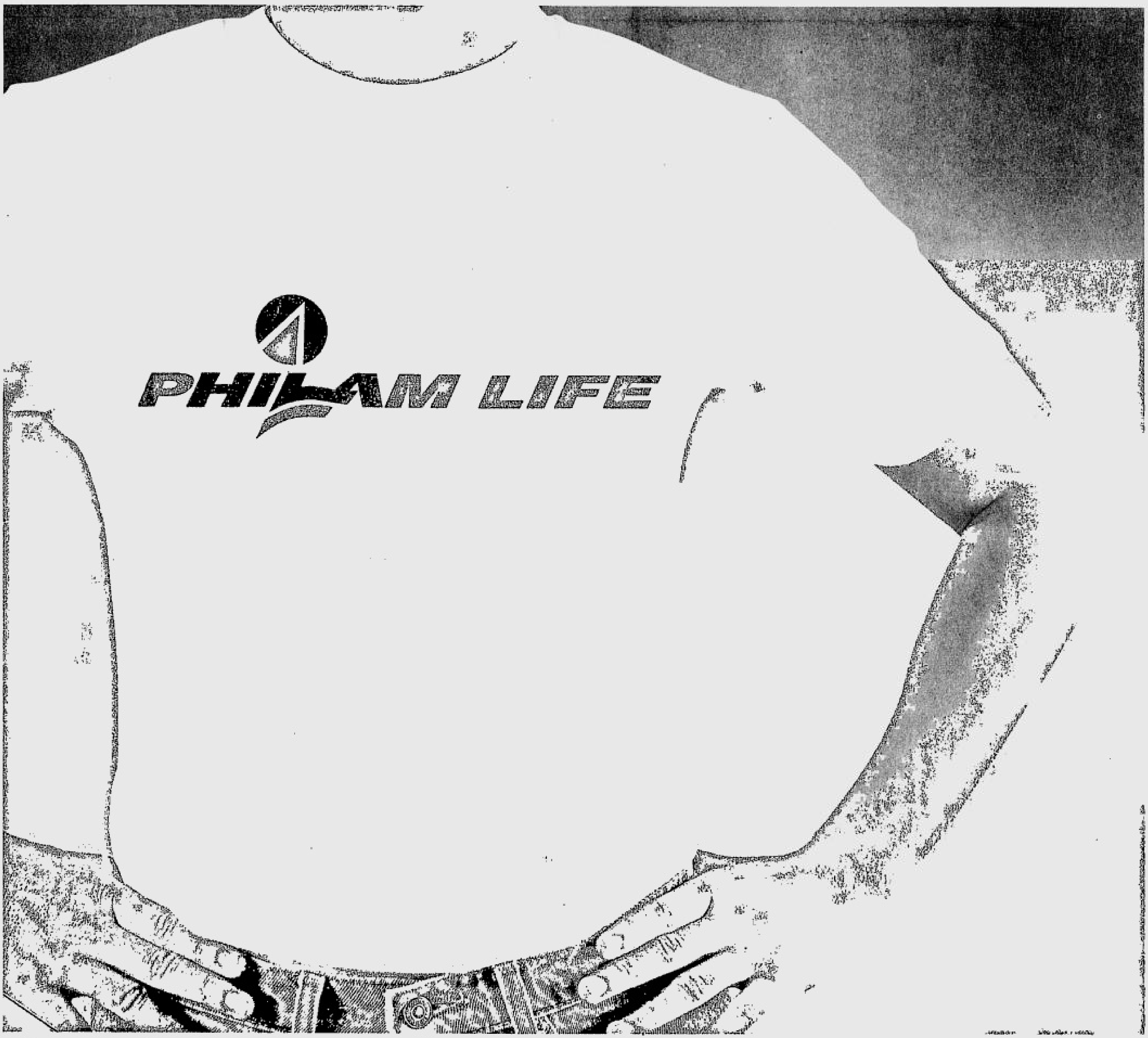

Clash of the titans, MTV style

CHINA Cojuangco as Aphrodite

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

THE COURAGE to face and triumph against overwhelming odds, with love for a mother, a spouse or a nation as the primary driving motivation.

That, in essence, is the message the Greek epics contain for children and teenagers today, says Gantimpala Theater Foundation (GTF) artistic director Tony Espejo.

GTF is slightly veering from its resident core of Filipino four plays—the much-toured productions of "Noli Me Tangere," "El Filibusterismo," "Florante at Laura" and "Ang Ibong Adarna"—to present a youth-friendly, pop-culturish take on the Grecian heroes Perseus and Jason in the two-hour musical "Grethology."

Written by librettist Mark A. Reyes, "Grethology" was first presented at the Metropolitan Theater in the early '90s. Espejo's decision to resurrect it was prompted by the request of a high-school teacher in Nueva Ecija that the theater company produce an alternative English-language production. Her students are regular GTF viewers.

For more than a decade, the four GTF productions have established a niche in high schools and colleges throughout the National Capital Region and Laguna. Frequent invitations have brought them as well to Visayas and Mindanao, sometimes accompanied by the occasional military guard under the protection of the local mayor in the more dangerous areas.

With this very young audience in mind—ranging from fifth-graders to college freshmen—Espejo decided to focus on the more positive aspects of the Grecian myths and tone down the more chilling, gut-wrenching ones.

The primary plot in the first act is about the young hero Perseus' battles with the great evil personified by the snake-headed Medusa in order to save the life of his mother Danäe, imprisoned on the island Seriphos by a lustful king.

The second act dwells on Jason's famous sea voyage with the trusty Argonauts to secure the Golden Fleece for his kingdom, against dragons, harpies and an endless army of fierce soldiers. Along the way, he marries the beautiful Medea as a reward.

No pretensions

A closer look at the classics, though, reveals some not so kiddie-friendly details. Perseus did ultimately kill the tyrant who kept his mother prisoner and, by accident, his biological father. Jason didn't exactly act as the de-

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THE GODS of "Grethology." On top of stairs is Glecy Hernandez as Lady Hera; standing are China Cojuangco as Aphrodite, Rene Nisperos as Hephaestus, Roeder as Phoebus Apollo; seated are Leo Ponseca as Poseidon and Its Saludo as Hestia.

voted husband, driving the grieving and angry Medea into the murder of her rival.

There was good reason, and more than enough material, for the Greek playwrights like Sophocles and Euripides to create lasting tragedies out of these myths.

"'Grethology' will not focus on the violence," says Espejo. "We have enough of that as it is. [The play] has no pretensions of being an intellectual production. Nor did we want to approach [the material] as a tragedy. Our target is for the children to learn Greek mythology. They come into the theater, knowing the basic storyline and characters, and we make them appreciate it even more. Our message is simple: Don't stop dreaming and hoping."

The entertainment, MTV-style influence is designed to make the message more acceptable to the young audience. Opening the play is a full song-and-dance regalia introducing the 12 Olympian gods headed by father Zeus. The deities serve as the narrators of the events in the musical.

In one number, Apollo does a rock-and-roll sequence, turning his harp into an electric guitar. Also, Jason's love ballad with Medea "will remind you of Mariah Carey's syrupy ditties," says Espejo.

But while the violence may be scaled down, the innumerable sword fights aren't.

Expect a lot of fencing, flying and fleeing sequences as the heroes encounter and clash against their designated monsters.

Heading the cast are pop singers and/or performers who have a following in the campus crowd: Jinky Llamanzares (Medusa), Wowie de Guzman (Perseus), Roeder (Apollo) and China Cojuangco (Aphrodite).

"[The play] is very light, yet gives you something to digest," says Espejo.

Years of performing before a diverse audience from all walks of life have given Espejo the confidence that his approach would cross the huge age barrier. Constant feedback from grade-schoolers to 18-year-olds has provided him with a first-hand view of what the audience wants.

"We change our attack depending on the audience. Now, the fifth-graders may love the singing and dancing. For a high-school audience, you may have to increase the histrionics. The college students want more emphasis on the principles and what the hero is fighting for."

"Grethology" tours this month until February. Call 8995475 or 8963503.

ROEDER as Phoebus Apollo

WOWIE de Guzman as Perseus

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The ISO framework also provides for the regular assessment of the health of Philamlife products and the processes that sustain them. This permits the company to easily identify and pare off products or methods that no longer meet Philamlife standards on customer satisfaction.

In the coming months, Philamlife will be aiming to certify the processes focused on bringing its products to its potential customers, and servicing the concerns of its present policyholders.

Even after it has secured accreditation for the said processes, Philamlife's ISO journey will surely not end. As Mr. Cuisia put it during the awarding ceremony, "The relentless pursuit for excellence and quality is the key to Philamlife's continued success." And quoting Ron Kaufman, he aptly ended his address with, "Good, Better, Best? Never let it rest, until your good becomes better and your better becomes the best."

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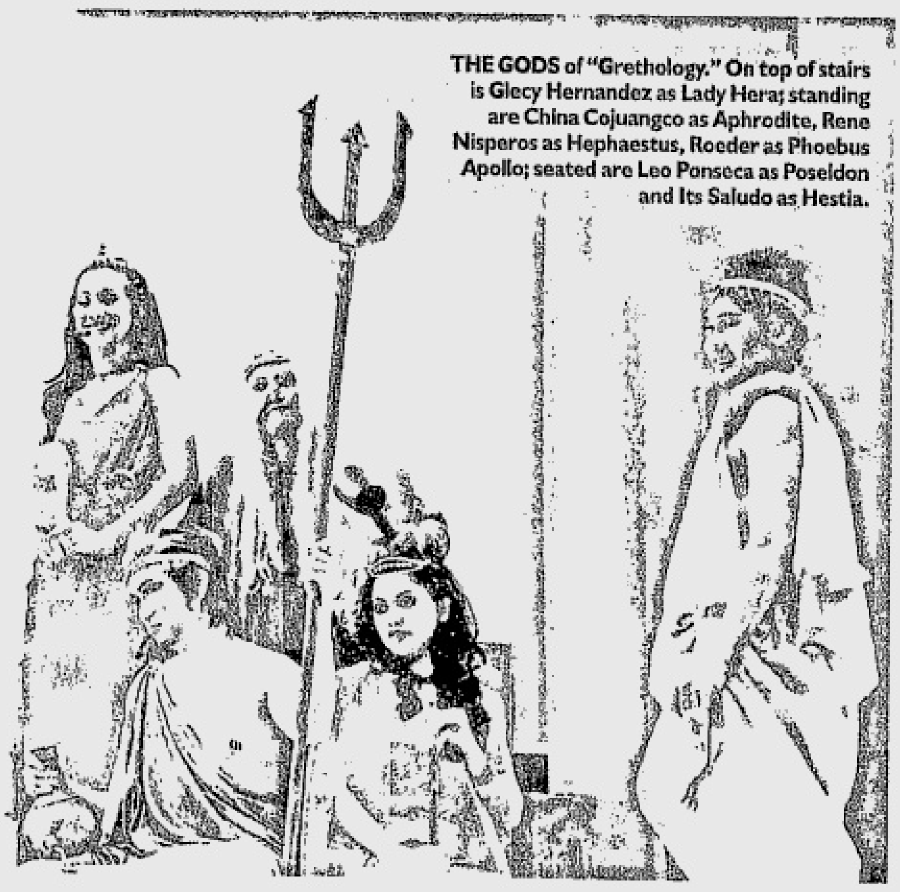

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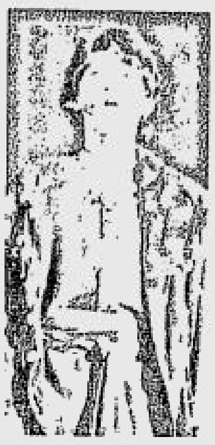

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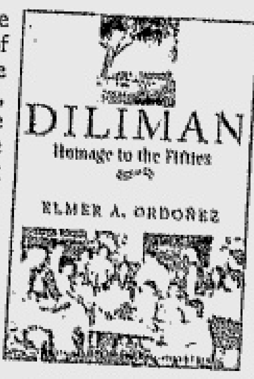
Ordoñez memoirs to be launched by UP Press

AN UNUSUAL collection of essays by Elmer Ordoñez, "Diliman: Homage to the Fifties," will be launched by the University of the Philippines Press on Dec. 15, 5:30 p.m., in the UP Press Book Bookstore at Balay Kalinaw on the Diliman campus.

A retrospective anthology of pieces about the state university during the '50s, the book is also a commentary on academic life, literature, culture, history and politics of more recent times, from the point of view of a witness and participant.

Until his retirement, Ordoñez was a professor of the UP's Department of English and Comparative Literature, of which he was also at one time chair. He is also the founding director of the University of the Philippines Press, and was associate for the essay of the UP Creative Writing Center (now the UP Institute of Creative Writing).



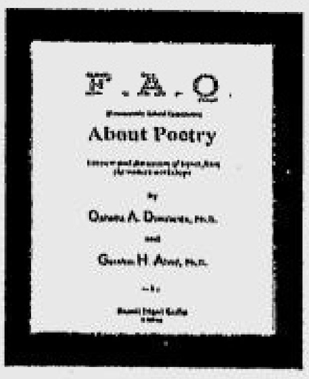
As a student, Ordoñez was the editor in chief of the Philippine Collegian (1950-51) and the 1952 "Philippinensian." He was active in the UP Writers' Club as vice president and as editor of the 1955 "Literary Apprentice."

With other writers, Ordoñez formed in 1951 the still active "Ravens," whose roster has included SV Epistola, Raul R. Ingles, Rony V. Diaz, Virginia Moreno, Adrian Cristobal, Andres Cristobal Cruz, Maro Santaromana, Pacifico Aprieto, Larry Francia, Alejandrino G. Hufana, Bernardo de Leon, Nick Nicolas Jr., Danny Villanueva, Romy Chua. National Artist Nick Joaquin is an honorary member.

The book's cover, designed by Fidel Rillo, reproduces a photo taken in 1951, showing the first UP writers workshop conducted by NVM Gonzalez (later National Artist for Literature) at his quonset cottage in Diliman.

The writers in the photo include members of the "Ravens," campus poets, playwrights and fictionists who are now of national and international standing.

UST Writing Center launches poetry manual, collection



THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies (UST-CCWS) will launch "F.A.Q. (Frequently Asked Questions) About Poetry" tomorrow at 4 p.m. in the CCWS workshop room, G/F, St. Raymund's Bldg., UST, España, Manila.

Jointly authored by premier poets Ophelia Alcantara Dimalanta and Gemino H. Abad, the book features a review and discussion of topics that commonly arise in poetry workshops. "F.A.Q About Poetry" is edited by Ramil Digal Gulle, CCWS junior associate for poetry.

Also to be launched is "The Nymph of MTV," the debut poetry collection of UST student and Palanca Award winner Angelo V. Suárez.

Both books are published by the UST Publishing House.

The launch is open to the public. Call 7313101 loc. 8281.

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11. The more reloads, the more number of electronic entries, the more chances of winning.

Start Date	End Date	Raffle Date
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 10 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Dec. 12 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 17 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Dec. 19 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 24 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Dec. 26 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 31 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 05 (Monday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 07 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 09 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 14 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 16 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 21 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 23 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 31 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Feb. 02 (Monday) 4:00pm

12. The weekly draws will be on Dec 12, 19, 26, January 5, 9, 16, 23 and Feb 2, 2004. Deadline of raffle entries and joining of the promo will be on January 31, 2004 at 11:59:59pm
13. A specific Touch Mobile number can only win once (1x) during the promo period. A subscriber can technically win more than once (1x) given that the drawn Touch Mobile numbers are not identical.
14. All winners will be notified via phone call and registered mail.
15. To validate identity of the winner, he/she will be asked to bring his/her Touch Mobile phone with the winning mobile number and a valid ID. The Cashier or any Globe Telecom Rep releasing the cheque will do a test call to validate the Calling Line Identity (CLI) of the phone. The CLI of the phone should match the winning mobile number. And the registered mail should also be brought when claiming their prize. Any lost SIMs will disqualify him from winning.

*** All notified winners should still have their Touch Mobile SIM active until the time of claiming the prize. Prizes will be forfeited for those who lost their SIMS at the time of claiming their prize

16. Prizes not picked up from within 60 days from receipt of notice will be forfeited with prior DTI approval.
17. Employees of Globe Telecom, Innove, Jimenez Basic Advertising, Starcomm and participating Globe Telecom Business Centers including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
18. Prizes are tax-free.

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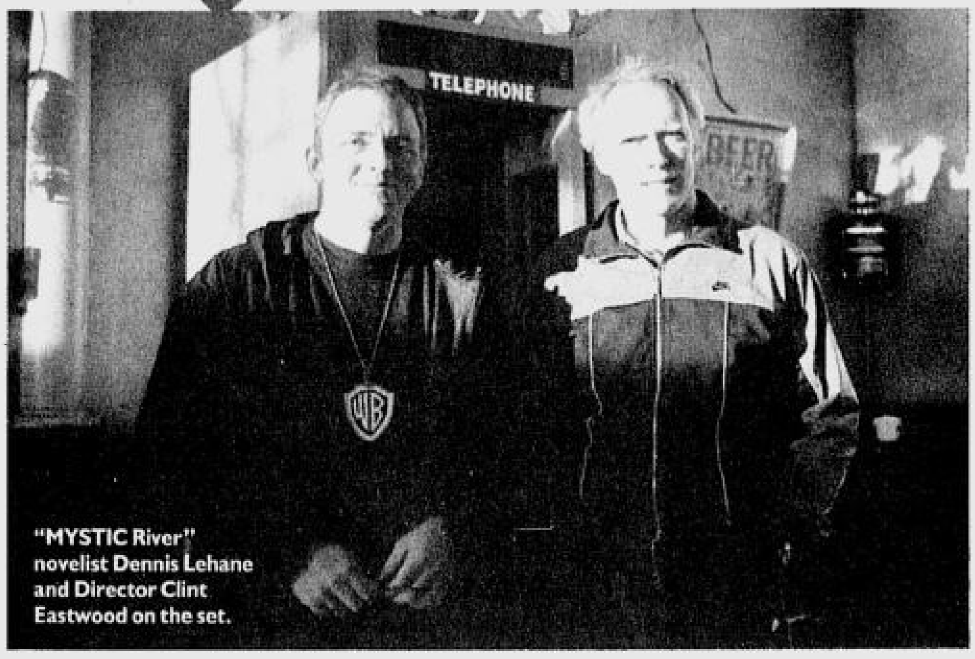
Books LIFESTYLE


"MYSTIC River" novelist Dennis Lehane and Director Clint Eastwood on the set.

The prize-winning novelist behind 'Mystic River,' Dennis Lehane, talks about writing, Clint Eastwood and seeing his novel transform into a buzz-worthy movie

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

'Mystic' writer

By Ruel S. de Vera

WHILE it should be a heady experience for any author to see one of his books distilled into the silver screen, it must be an extra heady experience to have it done by a cinematic icon.

Yet to hear novelist Dennis Lehane talk about it, he really didn't expect it at all.

"It didn't really matter to me," he says in his e-mail to the INQUIRER. "Hollywood has a pretty bad track record when it comes to adapting books, so I was never in a rush to see them turn one of my books into a bad movie."

True enough, because Lehane, who had won acclaim for his eight novels, got a pretty good deal: The movie was to be directed by Clint Eastwood and would feature the formidable trio of Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins.

"It's wonderful. I wouldn't have sold the rights to anyone but Eastwood. I like that his films are a little longer than the norm; he takes the time to delve into characters and place before he lets the plot take over. He respects the audience's intelligence. As for the cast, if someone tells you Sean Penn is going to be the lead in a film adapted from your book, trust me, it will make you happy. He's the best film actor of his generation. And the rest of the cast is an awfully talented group as well," he says.

Childhood secret

"Mystic River" tells of a childhood secret kept by three friends: Jimmy Marcus (Penn), Sean Devine (Bacon) and Dave Boyle (Robbins). Years later, that secret rears its head again when Jimmy's daughter is murdered, detective Sean has to investigate it and Dave might be involved.

Dark, gripping and heart-wrenching, "Mystic River" was a hot property as a novel and now, in this movie adaptation helmed by Eastwood, is generating considerable awards buzz.

Though the main characters in "Mystic River" are very close childhood friends, friends who wind up still very connected to

'MYSTIC'/H3

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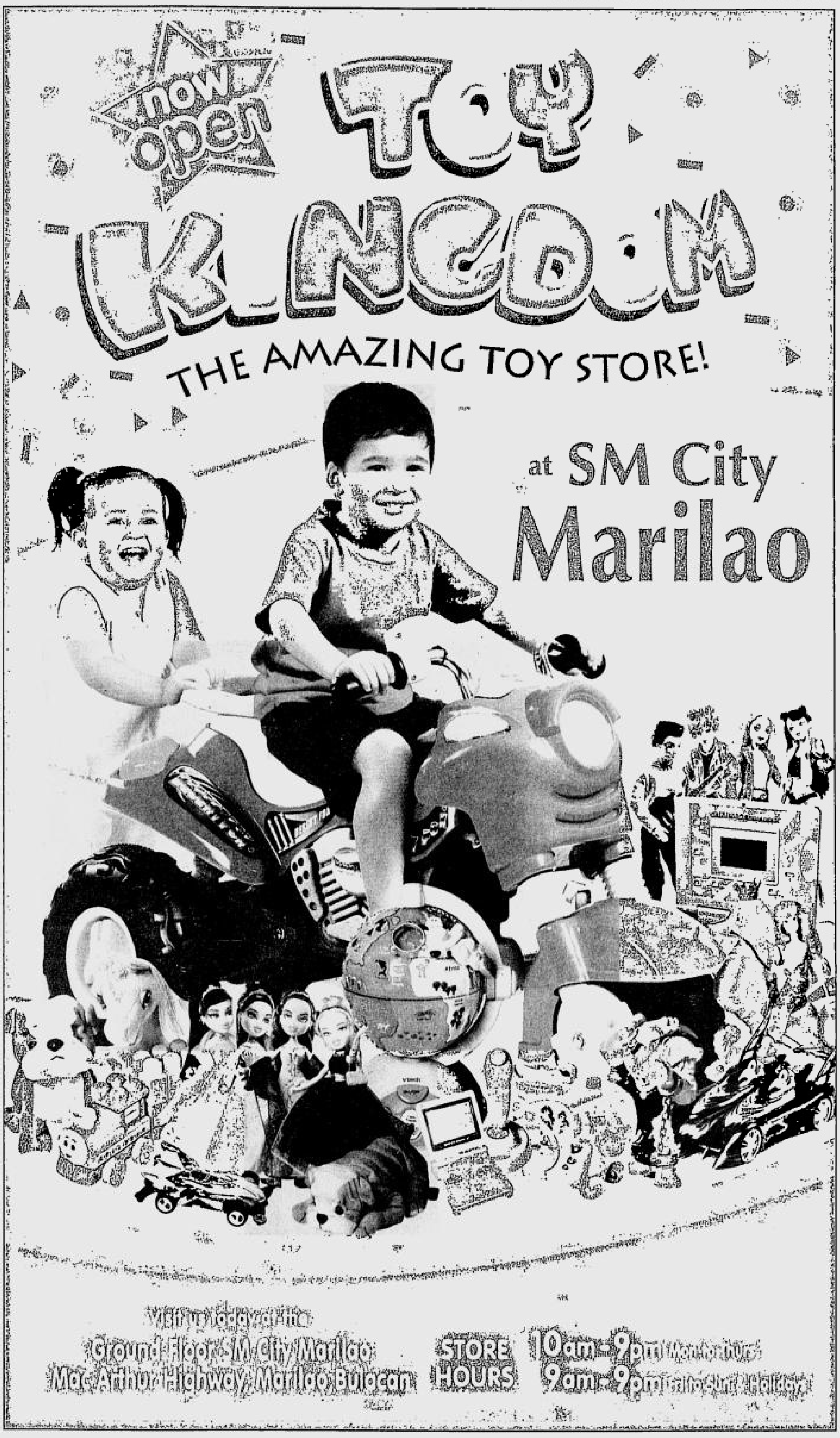

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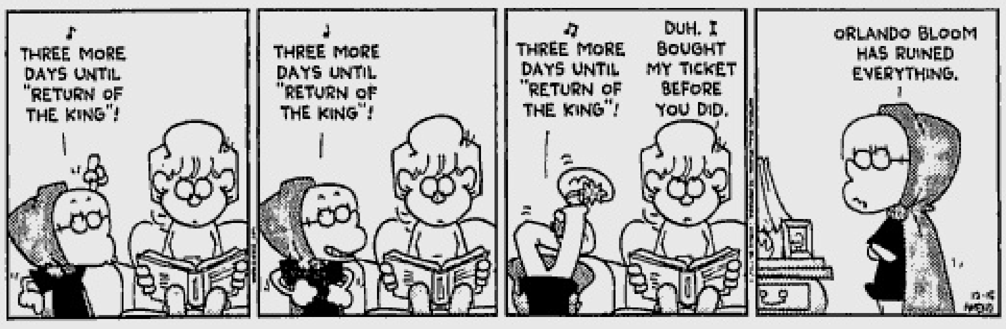
Dec. 16 - Rev. Msgr. Hubert Mylo C. Vergara
Dec. 17 - Rev. Msgr. Esteban U. Lo, L.R.M.S.
Dec. 18 - Rev. Fr. Nolan A. Que
Dec. 19 - Most Rev. Luis Antonio G. Tagle, D.D.
Dec. 20 - Rev. Msgr. Roberto C. Canlas
Dec. 21 - Rev. Fr. Mario S. Sobrejuanite, S.S.P.
Dec. 22 - Most Rev. Socrates B. Villegas, D.D.
Dec. 23 - Rev. Fr. Genaro O. Diwa

Cindy, Thanks for saying YES 10 years ago. Love, Martin

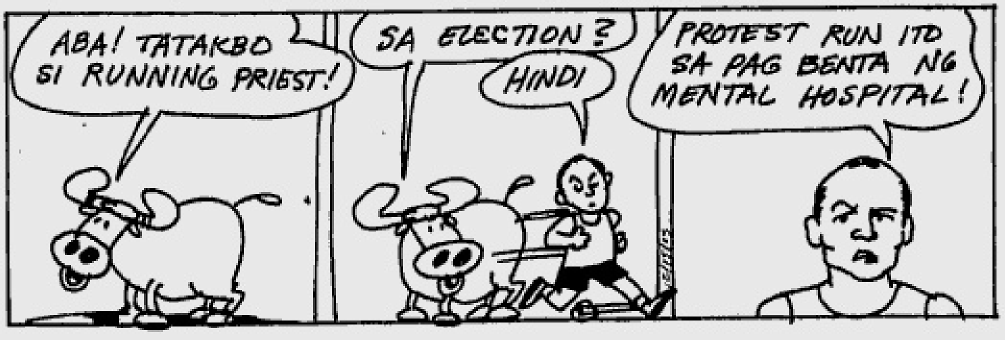
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


THREE MORE DAYS UNTIL "RETURN OF THE KING"!
THREE MORE DAYS UNTIL "RETURN OF THE KING"!
THREE MORE DAYS UNTIL "RETURN OF THE KING"!
DUH. I BOUGHT MY TICKET BEFORE YOU DID.
ORLANDO BLOOM HAS RUINED EVERYTHING.
12-15

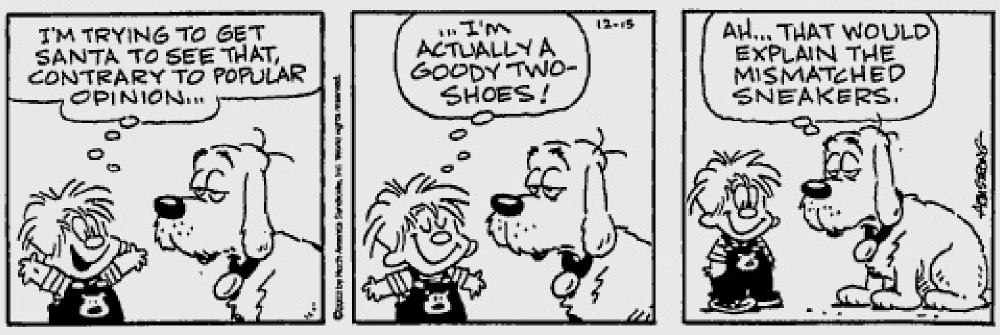
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ABA! TATAKBO SI RUNNING PRIEST!
SA ELECTION?
HINDI
PROTEST RUN ITO SA PAG BENTA NG MENTAL HOSPITAL!

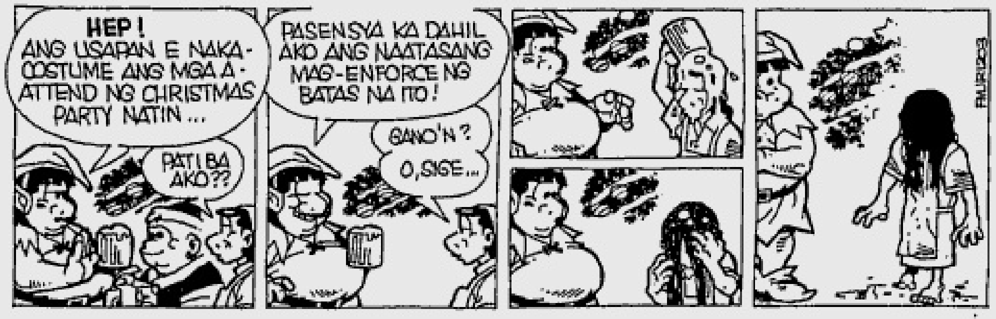
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M TRYING TO GET SANTA TO SEE THAT, CONTRARY TO POPULAR OPINION...
...I'M ACTUALLY A GOODY TWO-SHOES!
12-15
AH... THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE MISMATCHED SNEAKERS.

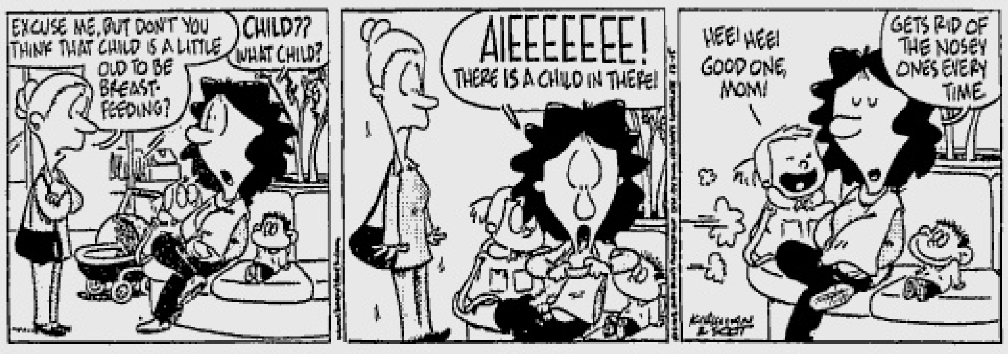
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HEP! ANG USAPAN E NAKA-COSTUME ANG MGA A-ATTEND NG CHRISTMAS PARTY NATIN ...
PATI BA AKO??
PASENSYA KA DAHIL AKO ANG NAATASANG MAG-ENFORCE NG BATAS NA ITO!
GANO'N?
O, SIGE...

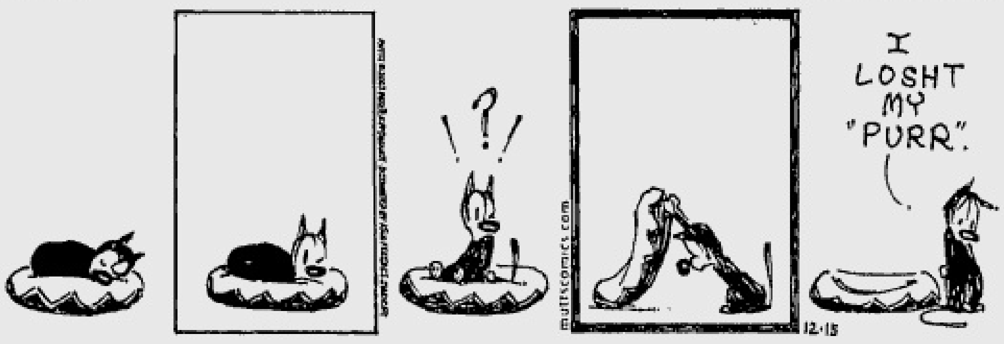
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


EXCUSE ME, BUT DON'T YOU THINK THAT CHILD IS A LITTLE OLD TO BE BREAST-FEEDING?
CHILD?? WHAT CHILD?
AIEEEEEEE! THERE IS A CHILD IN THERE!
HEE! HEE! GOOD ONE, MOM!
GETS RID OF THE NOSEY ONES EVERY TIME.

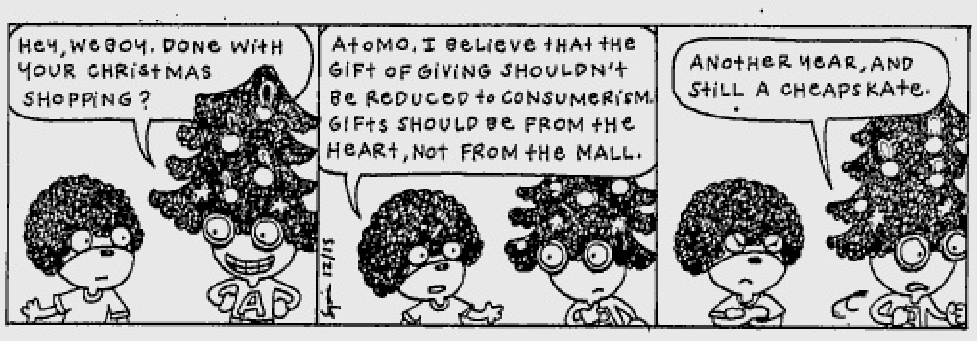
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


!?!
muttscomics.com
12-15
I LOSHT MY "PURR".

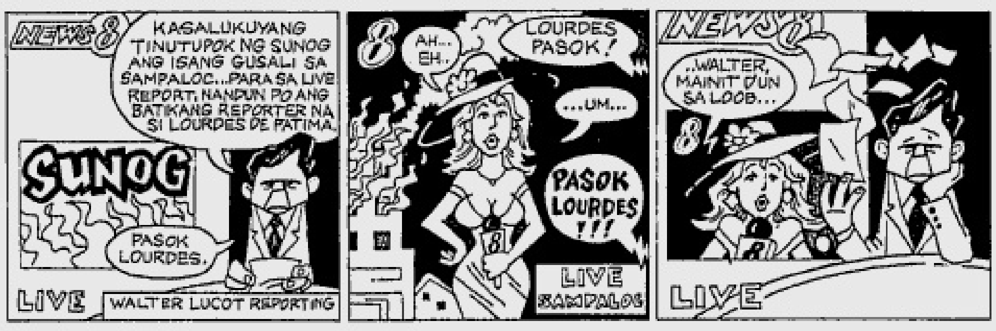
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, WeBoy. Done with your Christmas shopping?
Atomo, I believe that the gift of giving shouldn't be reduced to consumerism. Gifts should be from the heart, not from the mall.
Another year, and still a cheapskate.
12/15

NEWSMARYOSEP

BY RON RUIZ


NEWS 8
KASALUKUYANG TINUTUPOK NG SUNOG ANG ISANG GUSALI SA SAMPALOC...PARA SA LIVE REPORT, NANDUN PO ANG BATIKANG REPORTER NA SI LOURDES DE FATIMA.
SUNOG
PASOK LOURDES.
LIVE
WALTER LUCOT REPORTING
8
AH... EH..
LOURDES PASOK!
...UM...
PASOK LOURDES!!!
LIVE SAMPALOC
NEWS 8
..WALTER, MAINIT D'UN SA LOOB...
LIVE

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Your upbeat, breezy style makes you likable. People are attracted to your cheerful friendliness. In turn, these qualities promote your professional success. Your optimism and belief in yourself help you achieve what you want. You make others feel good. The year ahead focuses on social, fun times and marriage. **Birthdate of:** Don Johnson, actor; Helen Slater, actress; Mo Vaughn, baseball player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Start this week off with a firm intention to improve your job conditions in some way. After all, this is the area in your life where you are receiving the greatest blessings now and for the next nine months.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): By all means, tap into your creative potential. Try doing anything related to arts, crafts, acting, writing, photography—whatever.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is another reminder to let you know that you have the best real estate opportunities (and chances to improve them) from now until the autumn of 2004. (The best in more than a decade!)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Increased optimism allows you to dream bigger now. You see that your life can be better than you'd ever hoped for before. (Thinking can make it so.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your wealth and assets will increase in the next year. Adopt a positive attitude about this. Look for ways to make it happen (because it can).

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Mars stays in each sign for seven weeks. However, this year Mars is in Pisces (directly opposite you) for six months! This brings tension with partners. It'll be gone by January.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You've been working unusually hard this year. That's because Mars is driving you. This energy boost will stay until next spring. Make hay while the sun shines!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Focus on your possessions today. What do you own that makes you feel better about yourself? Think about it. What do you feel particularly proud of?

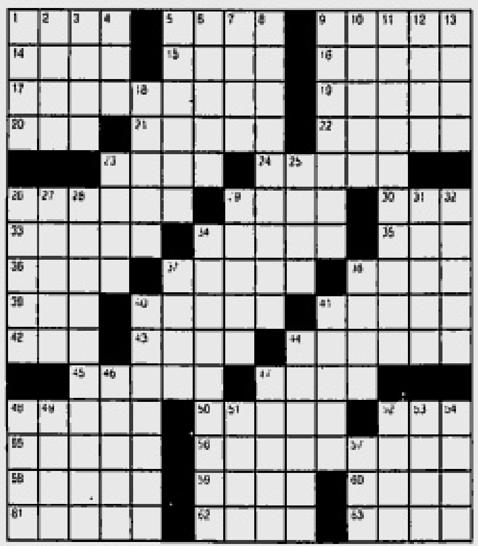
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good day to make new resolutions about how to improve your appearance, and how to improve your style of relating to partners and those who are close to you. Think of three things you could do.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Partnerships are strained now. Those that have outlived their usefulness will end. However, those that will endure must undergo adjustments this year.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your popularity is increasing this month. Accept all invitations. Join clubs. Enjoy the company of others, because next month will be quite different.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Younger, artistic friends want your company now. Because you have a fabulous imagination and you often think in pictures, they love your input. You inspire others.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Frances Burton
Summerville, GA

12/15/03

ACROSS
1 Coated cheese
5 Sailor's mop
9 Caesar or Waldorf
14 __ Alto, CA
15 Byron poem
16 Old-womanish
17 Wakeup call
19 Grow on the vine
20 19th letter
21 Make road repairs
22 Apothecary units
23 Camp beds
24 Shape of fashion
26 French Louisianans
29 Thumb through
30 Howard or Silver
33 Diminish
34 Antecedent
35 Compete
36 Gullets
37 Little lakes
38 Depraved
39 Flow back
40 Danza on "Taxi"
41 Walked to and fro
42 Rowing-crew member
43 Moreover
44 Tightwads
45 Very strange
47 Depart in a hurry
48 Use a razor
50 Bucket wheel
52 Possesses
55 Confiscated
56 Cheapskate
58 Standing ready
59 Goad
60 Johnson of "Laugh-In"
61 Lahr and Parks
62 Give guff to
63 Encounter

DOWN
1 Fencing tool
2 Diary increments
3 Beer choices
4 Barnyard greeting
5 Falls as ice
6 Desires
7 Precinct
8 Pikelike marine fish
9 Pilchard
10 Charged particle
11 Insincere support
12 Opposite of aweather
13 Bear lairs
18 Flip side of supine
23 Slices
25 Bonny gal
26 Walk-on appearance
27 Addis __, Eth.
28 Hard candy
29 __ Domingo
31 Well worker
32 Must have
34 Majority will
37 Hinayana Buddhist language
38 Extensive
40 Sea north of Norway
41 Rice dish
44 Des __, IA
46 Turn inside out
47 Military jails
48 Wild attempt
49 Patriot Nathan
51 Southern veggie
52 Enlarge one's staff
53 Feed the kitty
54 Editor's directive
57 On the __ (fleeing)

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

S	T	E	P	U	P	S		D	O	U	B	L	E	R
M	A	N	U	M	I	T		E	N	G	R	A	V	E
I	M	I	T	A	T	E		B	E	H	A	V	E	S
L	A	G	S		A	V	E	R	S		G	E	N	T
E	L	M		A	P	E	R	I	E	S		N	T	H
D	E	A		D	A	N	G	E	L	O		D	U	O
			L	E	T	S	O	F	F	S	T	E	A	M
C	A	P	E								E	R	L	E
A	L	L	O	F	A	S	U	D	D	E	N			
R	M	A		O	P	E	N	E	R	S		T	N	T
F	A	Y		R	O	A	D	M	A	P		R	I	O
A	G	U	A		S	W	O	O	P		P	I	C	A
R	E	P	L	E	T	E		T	E	L	E	X	E	S
E	S	T	E	L	L	E		I	R	O	N	I	S	T
S	T	O	C	K	E	D		C	Y	G	N	E	T	S

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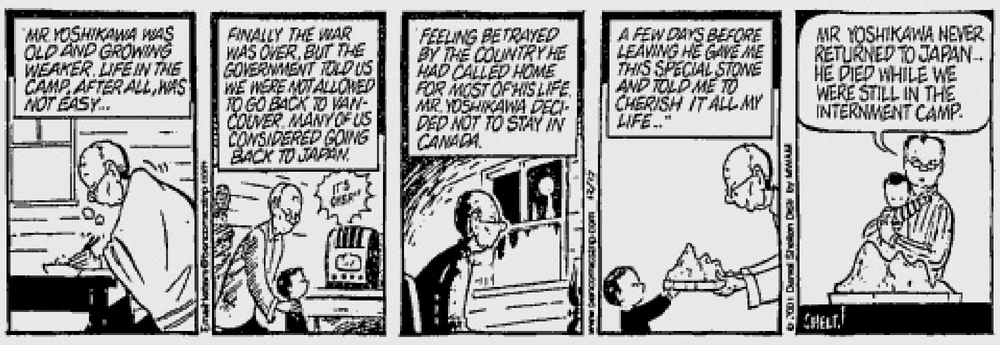
12/13/03

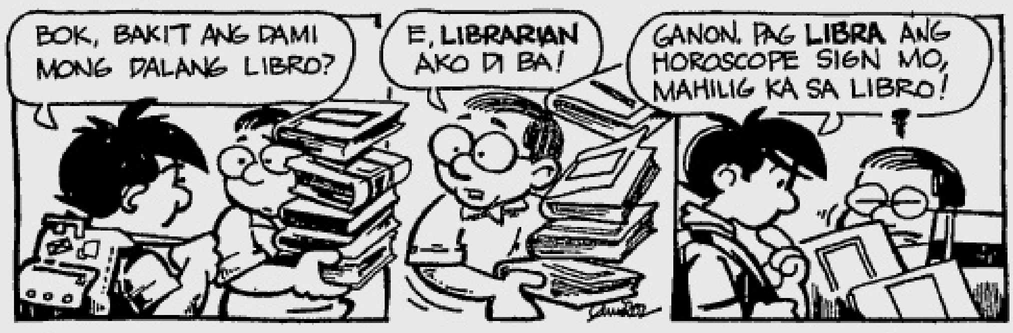
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MR. YOSHIKAWA WAS OLD AND GROWING WEAKER. LIFE IN THE CAMP, AFTER ALL, WAS NOT EASY...
FINALLY THE WAR WAS OVER, BUT THE GOVERNMENT TOLD US WE WERE NOT ALLOWED TO GO BACK TO VANCOUVER. MANY OF US CONSIDERED GOING BACK TO JAPAN.
IT'S OVER!
FEELING BETRAYED BY THE COUNTRY HE HAD CALLED HOME FOR MOST OF HIS LIFE, MR. YOSHIKAWA DECIDED NOT TO STAY IN CANADA.
A FEW DAYS BEFORE LEAVING HE GAVE ME THIS SPECIAL STONE AND TOLD ME TO CHERISH IT ALL MY LIFE..."
MR. YOSHIKAWA NEVER RETURNED TO JAPAN.. HE DIED WHILE WE WERE STILL IN THE INTERNMENT CAMP.

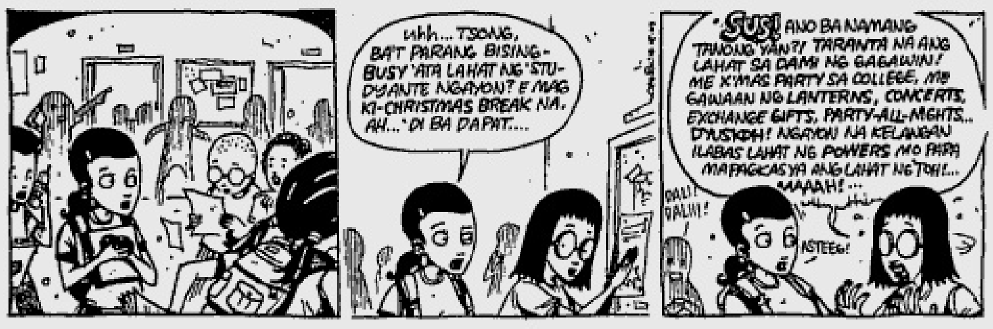
GENG'S GAMES

BY AMIEL RUFO


BOK, BAKIT ANG DAMI MONG DALANG LIBRO?
E, LIBRARIAN AKO DI BA!
GANON. PAG LIBRA ANG HOROSCOPE SIGN MO, MAHILIG KA SA LIBRO!

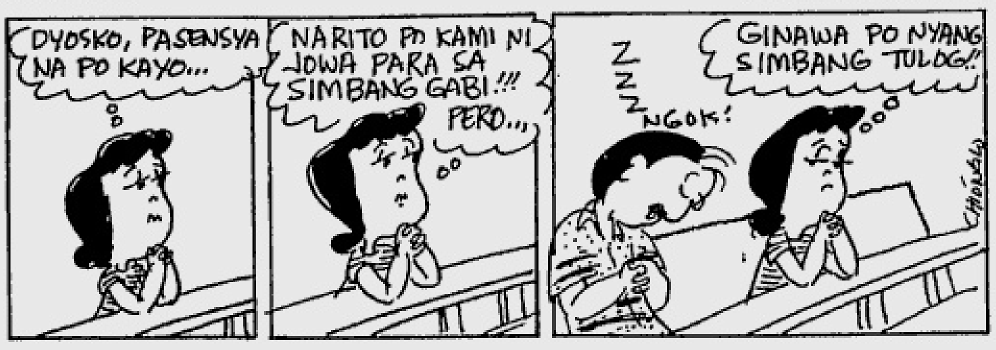
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


uhh... TSONG, BA'T PARANG BISING-BUSY 'ATA LAHAT NG 'STUDYANTE NGAYON? E MAG KI-CHRISTMAS BREAK NA. AH... 'DI BA DAPAT....
"SUS! ANO BA NAMANG TANONG YAN?! TARANTA NA ANG LAHAT SA DAMI NG GAGAWIN! ME X'MAS PARTY SA COLLEGE, ME GAWAAN NG LANTERNS, CONCERTS, EXCHANGE GIFTS, PARTY-ALL-NIGHTS.. D'USKOH! NGAYON NA KELANGAN ILABAS LAHAT NG POWERS MO PARA MAPAGKASYA ANG LAHAT NG 'TOH!... AAAAH! ...
DALI! DALI!
ASTEEG!

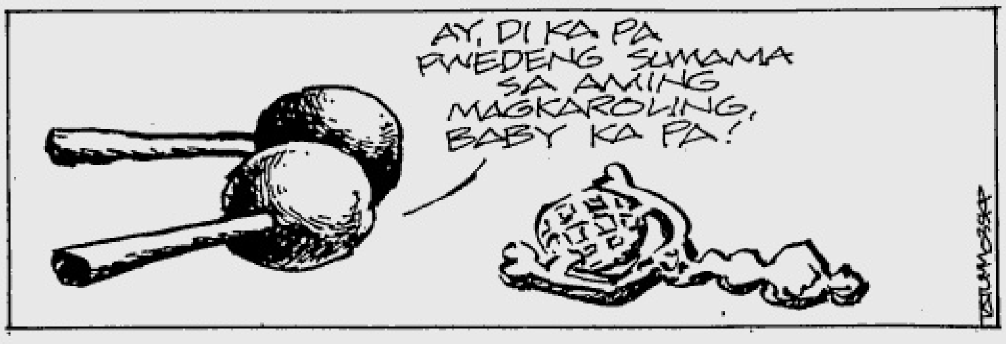
LOVEKNOTS

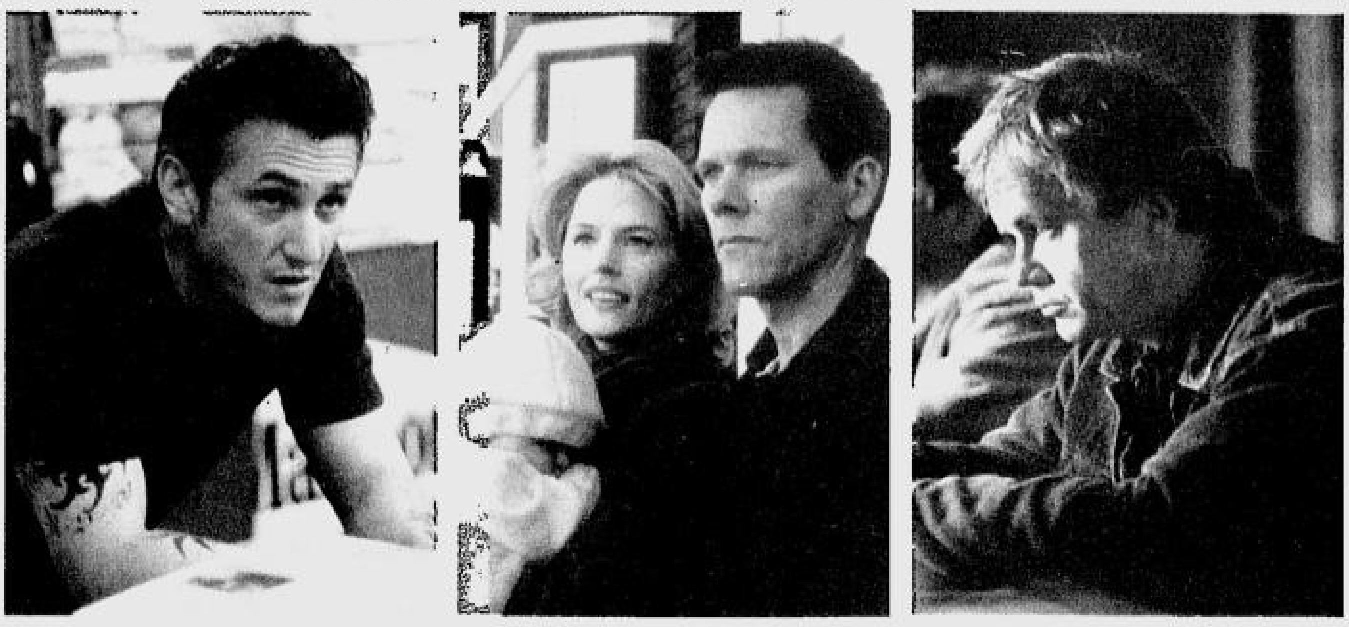
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DYOSKO, PASENSYA NA PO KAYO...
NARITO PO KAMI NI JOWA PARA SA SIMBANG GABI!!! PERO..,
ZZZ
NGOK!
GINAWA PO NYANG SIMBANG TULOG!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


AY, DI KA PA PWEDENG SUMAMA SA AMING MAGKAROLING, BABY KA PA!



(FROM left) Sean Penn, Tori Davis, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins star in Clint Eastwood's critically acclaimed drama, "Mystic River," based on the book by Dennis Lehane. The film also stars Laurence Fishburne, Marcia Gay Harden and Laura Linney.

'Mystic' writer

From page H1

each other at a later age, Lehane explains he didn't have a direct experience of it.

"I'm still close to several people I grew up with but, no, I never lost a child to murder or suspected a friend of mine killed someone."

In fact, he argues that "Mystic River" is not autobiographical at all. "When I was young, I had a fight with a friend and was picked up by the police and driven home and neither myself or my friend thought to ask to see the officers' badges. This horrified my mother, and the more I looked back on the incident as I grew older the more I thought, 'What would have happened if they weren't police?' That question gradually began to obsess me and that's what inspired the novel. Beyond that, though, it's pure fiction."

He estimates it took him about two years to complete "Mystic River."

"By the time I sat down to write it, it had been gestating for six years, and it had become quite personal to me. I didn't want to make any mistakes, so I probably put too much pressure on myself. I wrote 300 pages to get the first hundred of the book and threw out the other 200. That wasn't easy, believe me."

Ego-less

Eastwood, Lehane says, kept him involved during the adaptation process, something the author appreciates.

"Eastwood and the screenwriter, Brian Helgeland, were terrific about keeping me in the loop. Far more than I ever would have dared hope. So I was consulted, I was involved in minor tweaking in the final stages. It was great. Eastwood is ego-less when it comes to the work. What I mean is that he's got a big enough ego to have his own vision and imprint for the work and protect it from the meddling of others who don't belong, as it should be. But once he's satisfied that it fits his vision, he's more than open to bring in the other architects—in this case Brian, chiefly, and me, to a far lesser extent-to help him solidify it."

It has been a strange ride for the Boston-based Lehane who has kept some pretty odd jobs on his path of being a writer. Born in Massachusetts, he had stints as a waiter, a counselor for mentally handicapped kids, limo driver, even a bookstore clerk. His favorite job was as a parking valet at a Ritz-Carlton.

"That was a lot of fun," he says.

Yet what he has always wanted to do is write, something he hopes to keep doing for the rest of his life. "I'm not very good at anything else," he says.

Lehane, in fact, has some very old school habits, like listening to the right mood music when he writes. His most beloved habit, however, is writing his fiction in long hand.

"It has something to do with the smoothness of it, the flow of the pen across the page. Writing directly onto a screen makes me feel self-conscious. The words seem too public somehow, not entirely mine anymore the way they are when they're spread across the pages of a legal pad in my ugly scrawl."

In the middle of all this Hollywood hoopla, Lehane is steadfastly maintaining his usual schedule, living life the only way he knows how.

"I write, I read, I imagine things, scenarios, characters. I watch a lot of movies and play pool and tennis and spend a lot of time with my dogs and my friends. I'm a pretty boring guy."

Is there already something coming up for him? "Yes," he answers, "I am working on something but all I'll say is that it's set in 1919. I'm superstitious about discussing work before it's done."

It is so easy to forget in the media maelstrom that surrounds the movie "Mystic River" that Lehane is a writer of books, a craftsman of stories told on the page in his inimitable fashion.

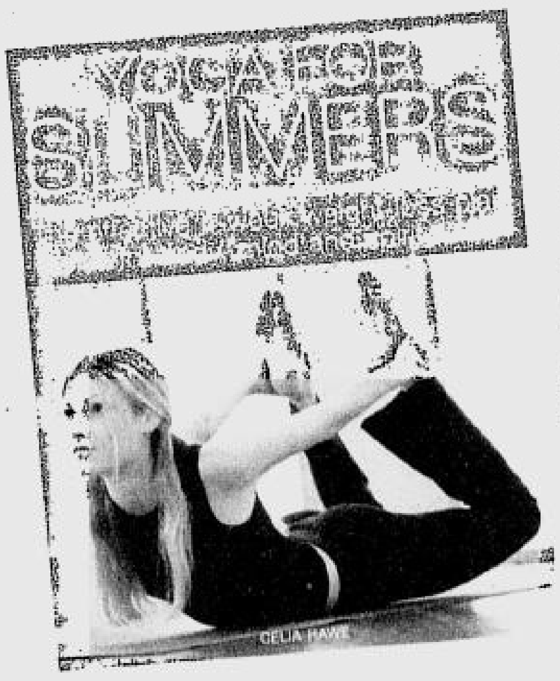
While he's happy with the success of "Mystic River," he's looking beyond that as well, looking for his next breakout hit. "I hope so. It wouldn't be much fun to peak at 35," he says.

Amid all the horror stories often involved with Hollywood adaptations of fantastic books, Dennis Lehane knows he made the right choice with "Mystic River."

Thinking about the movie, he says simply: "I'm quite pleased with it. As I said above, it's faithful to the book, beautifully cast, beautifully directed. I got very lucky."

Warner Bros.' "Mystic River" is showing in Metro Manila theaters.

Be in control with yoga



POWER Books Specialty Store introduces "Yoga For Slimmers," a groundbreaking regimen that helps stop the endless cycle of weight loss and weight gain by letting you take charge of your body, eating habits and attitude. It focuses on the gentle Hatha yoga technique that can be practiced by anyone. It balances the body in order to gain optimum health, fitness and confidence.

Each chapter provides three to four yoga exercises and stretches and builds up to a 40-minute routine of energizing, motivational and relaxing postures.

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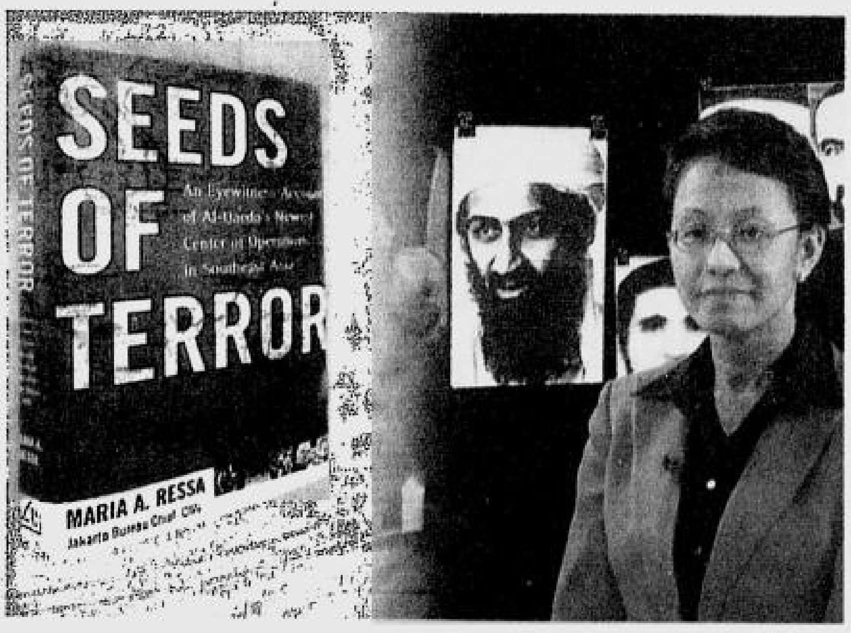
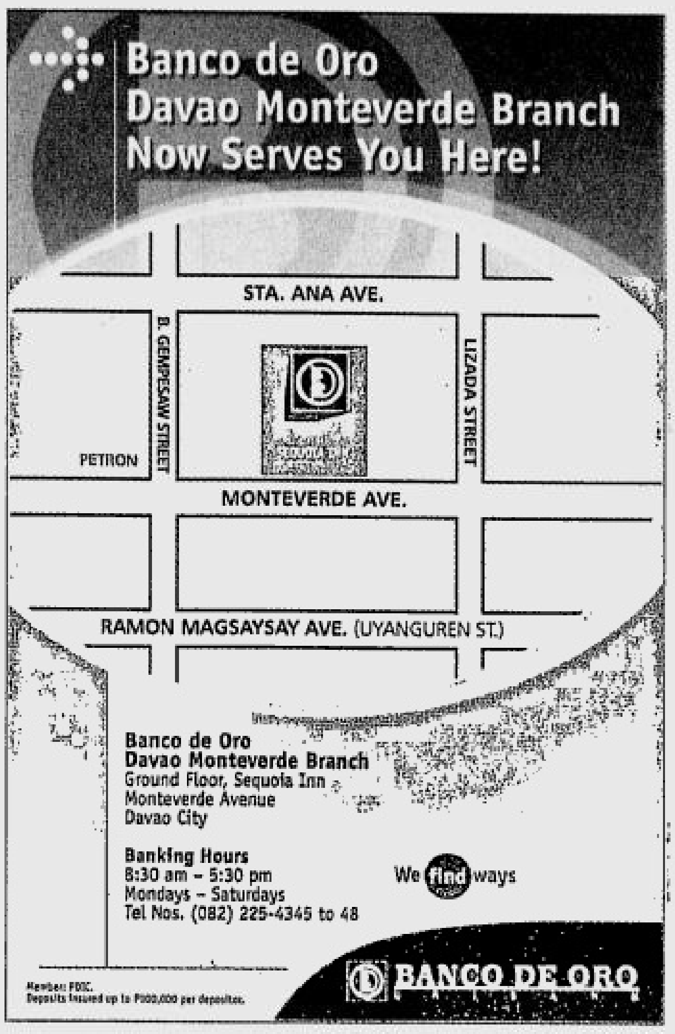


THE BOOK "Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of Al-Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia" will be launched today at 5 p.m. at Power Books Greenbelt 4. Published by the Free Press of Simon & Schuster, the book is authored by Filipina journalist Maria A. Ressa, who heads the Jakarta Bureau of CNN.



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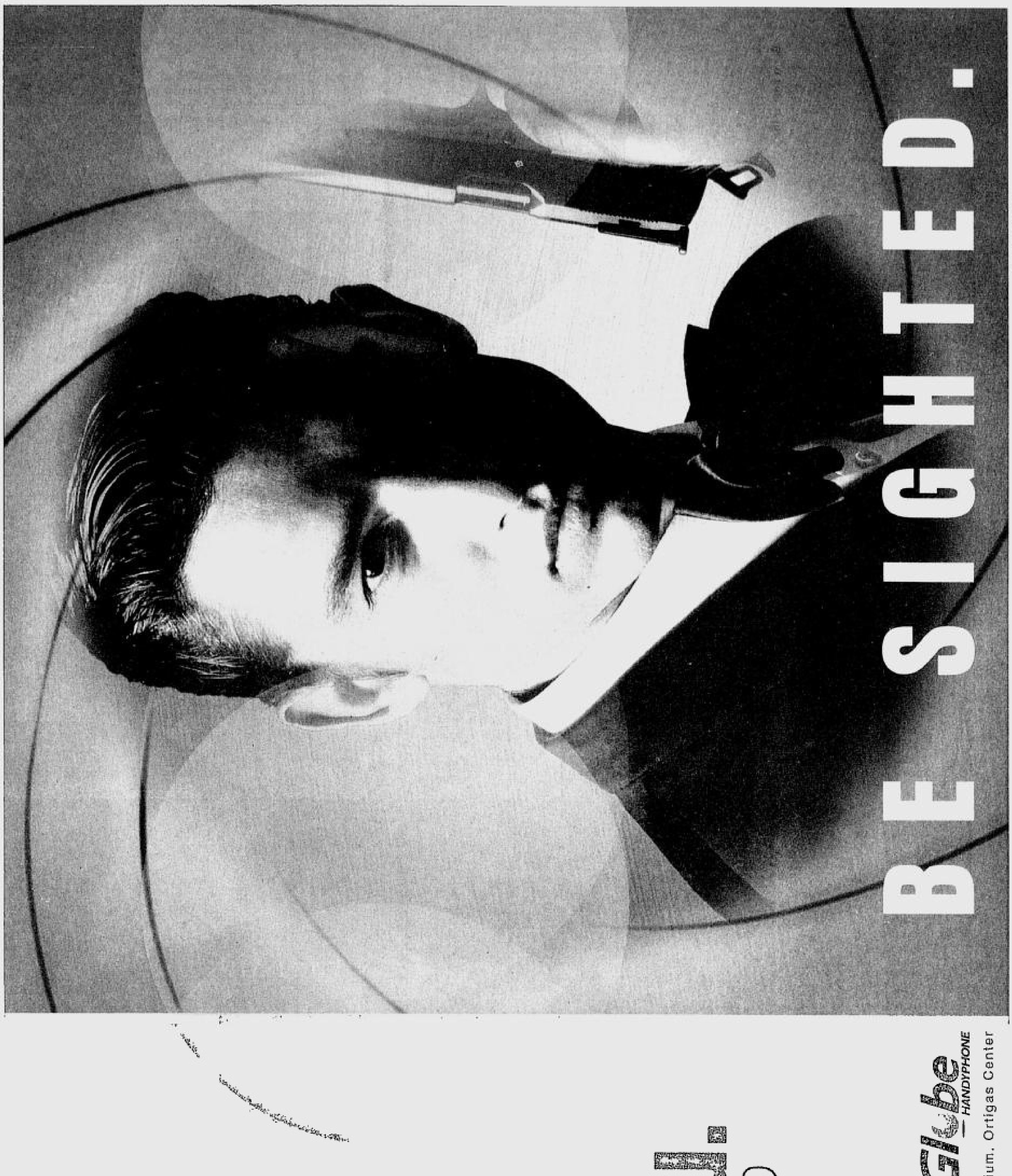
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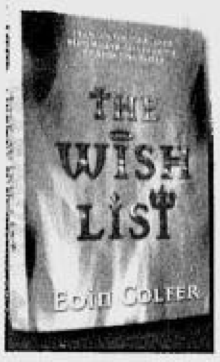


Books to read in the holidays

POWERBOOKS Specialty Store has some titles to enjoy during the holidays for people who plan to just stay home, relax and and read.

A "Life on the Cusp" is a collection of essays about midlife. The authors write about the turning points of their lives, the cusps that influenced their attitudes toward this stage of life.

Filipino-American writer Jessica Hagedorn returns with "Dream Jungle," which chronicles Philippine history from the height of the Marcos era to the end of the 20th century, with larger-than-life characters.

"In The Wish List" is a heartwarming tale of a girl's last chance and the love she will need to redeem herself.

J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Silmarillion" is the story of the First Age, the ancient drama to which the characters in "Lord of the Rings" look back and even took part in.

In "Silent Night", award winning historian Stanley Weinstraub tells the story of the Christmas football match between England and German soldiers on the frontline in 1914.

Superstitions and folk beliefs that have influenced the lives of generations of Filipinos are tackled in "Don't Take A Bath on A Friday." National Book Award winner Neni Sta. Ana Romana-Cruz has compiled a delightful collection of these beliefs.

With "Holly," Jude Deveraux conjures a tale full of dazzling intrigue and romance.

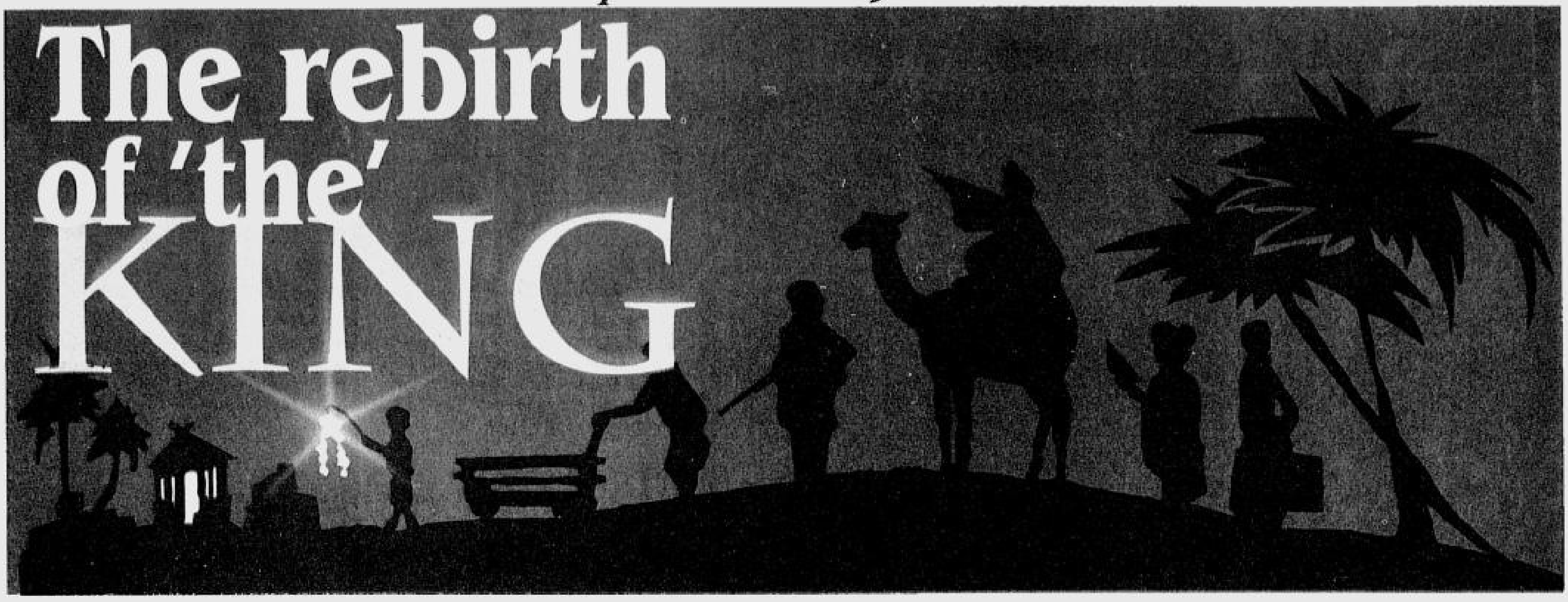
Mitch Albom's debut novel, "Tuesdays with Morrie," gives an almost magical chronicling of Morrie's lasting gift to the world.

The future is revealed in "The Oracle Book," which is also a do-it-yourself divination.

In diaries kept by 19-year-old Sergeant Eric Evans, "So Far From Home," the young soldier describes his life in all of its contradictions.

Call the PowerBooks customer service hotline at 7576428 to 29.

THE ORACLE BOOK



The rebirth of 'the' KING

On Dec. 25, hundreds of millions of Christians around the world will celebrate the birth of the one true King, Jesus Christ. The day is a constant reminder that after all the shopping and the gift-giving, the drinking parties and Kris Kringles, the best gift is one's self. The gift of smile, love, and life, is the most precious of all.

5 ways to survive the 25th

By Normandy dela Paz

FOR those who have spent all their Christmas pasts in a daze, some might already be an Ebenezer Scrooge in the offing. What with the yearly rushed shopping; an irate family member or friend that you've forgotten to buy a gift for; incessant ranting of your kids or *mga inaanak* that you didn't get them the latest toys; fisticuffs with a drunken friend during a Yuletide binge, due to a small argument; or your *utang* list that can outstretch the Great Wall of China, you can't help but say "Bah! Humbug!" Well, there's no stopping Christmas now, whether you choose to go into hibernation and sleep off the last remaining days or go to the Middle East. The latter idea might work, but given what's left in your much malnourished wallet because of the Yuletide season, all you can do is look at the pictures inside your war-torn billfold. But hey, Christmas doesn't have to be a swirling vortex of chaos to you Scroogy boy or girl. It's the time when you enjoy fond memories and make new ones. You know like the song goes, "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire, Jack Frost nipping at your nose..." (if you live in Baguio); and not memories of a drunk "nut" rolling under your Opel's tire, a Jack knife ripping at your nose. Before the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future haunt you, here are 5 tips on how you can make the reminiscence of this Christmas a merry one:

1. Like your grandma always tells you, it's never too early to start your Christmas shopping. - Yeah, you've just wiped your forehead after finishing your haggling and playing tug-

WAYS/ 12

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5236 Series of 2003

5 ways to survive the 25th

From page l2

o-war with someone who can be the next WWF champ, for a last piece of shirt in the bargain section, which is perfect for your uncle's father's niece's friend of a friend of a neighbor's daughter. And while putting some liniment on your sore shoulder because of all the pulling and tugging, you say to yourself "Would I want to do this all over again next year?" - definitely not. The best time to do your Christmas shopping is around the start of the year, when Christmas items like wrappers, decors, and left over "great-Christmas-gift-ideas" offered by malls are on sale. Plus, no long lines at the cashier.

2. Make a list and check it twice. - You surely don't want to be forgotten when it's gift giving time, so why should you forget those who are special to you? Make a list of all your family, relatives, friends, officemates, etc. You can do it either alphabetically or according to relation. If you are the obsessive-compulsive type, you can arrange the names starting from who has the cleanest toenails. If you're the scientific kind, classify them according to kingdom, subkingdom, phylum, subphylum, class, subclass, order, family, genus, and species. Be creative in making your list, so that you can have something funny to look at while doing your shopping.

3. Get to know the interests, hobbies, and likes of those you want to give gifts to. - This way there are no sweet lemons when you give your presents to them. Kids can be a major pain when they don't get what they want for Christmas. So ask friends or relatives about the in-thing when it comes to toys. You never now what kids are with today. Yesterday they might have been playing with the latest Domo Arigato Mr. Roboto 2003 model, tomorrow it might be the latest Ping, FPJ, Ate Glo or Roco action figure complete with waving hand action and Kung-Fu grip. Also be creative with your gifts. Avoid the usual tie-for-dad- cooking-set-for-mom syndrome. You might try giving dad a cooking set plus a cookbook so that he can whip something up for your family come Christmas, and giving mom a tie with "The Best Mom in the World" printed on it for a change.

4. Control your food and alcohol intake. - Lechon, beer, lechon and more beer. By the time Christmas is over, you might end up stiffer than a *nilasing na hipon* dish. Yup, there's a lot of food to go around during this festive season, but don't pig out like food will be banned by the government tomorrow. Always take everything in moderation, to keep bad cholesterol, indigestion, and high blood pressure at bay. And when you are drinking with your best "homies", tempers usually flare up at the slightest hint of a bad joke when everyone's gotten too much to drink. Monitor not only the bottles you've downed, but also the things you're going to say. No matter how funny it is to ask your friend if he/she had a rebond or just shampooed his/her silky smooth flowing nose hair (*tutsang* for you, Domingo), it ain't funny when your friend's knuckles are already giving your kisser a smack.

5. Prepare a Christmas budget and stick to that budget. - You don't want to start your year in financial ruin, being harassed by credit card collectors on the phone, or by your friendly neighborhood *bumbay*. Check out the stores or *tiangges* that offer the best deals. Set a fixed price for every gift you are going to give, and an estimated budget for your holiday feast. Also write down all you have bought and its corresponding prices, so that you would know how much you're already spent and what's left in the Christmas coffers, and not get caught with your jaw dropping like a broken Black Hawk helicopter when you see that your debt is as tall as Shaquille O'Neal chugging on growth pills.

Christmas might prove to be the happiest of occasions, but for those caught unprepared, it can be quite a nuisance. A circulating e-mail this Yuletide season tells of a woman doing her late Christmas shopping with her kid. They hop inside the elevator of the department store, which is full of people, and says with much irritation "Who ever invented Christmas should be killed". A voice speaks out from the back and answers "We already did." Since this is also the time for bonuses, here's a bonus tip - don't forget what and whom Christmas is all about. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

MODERN DAY SANTAS

Members of the Senate Spouses Foundation Inc (SFFI) get ready to shop for the street children under the care of Tahanang Mapagpala Foundation Inc as part of its Christmas project. Shown from left are: Henri Kahn, honorary member; lawyer Fely Arroyo; Andrea Bautista, daughter of Senator Revilla; Lyn Jaworski; Susan Flavier; Rep. Cynthia Villar; SFFI president Mila Drilon; Bing Pimentel and Mrs. Fernan.

Meet and greet Santa at Edsa Shangri-La

EDSA Shangri-La Manila celebrates Christmas with fun activities for the whole family.

He's making a list and checking it twice- from Dec. 16 to 23, meet and greet Santa Claus at the Lobby from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. On Dec. 24 and 25, Santa graces the Lobby from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Children can have their pictures taken with Santa and tell him all about their Christmas wishes.

Kids and kids at heart are invited to the Storytelling at the Lobby Lounge from 4 to 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 16, 18, 20, 22 and 24. Watch and listen as celebrities like Brad Turvey and Jeff Rodriguez narrate all-time favorite fairy tales.

Then, bring the whole family to the Garden Ballroom for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day mass at 10 p.m., the New Year's Eve mass at 9 p.m. and New Year's Day mass at 10 a.m.

Edsa Shangri-La, Manila is located at 1 Garden Way, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. For inquiries, call 633-8888.

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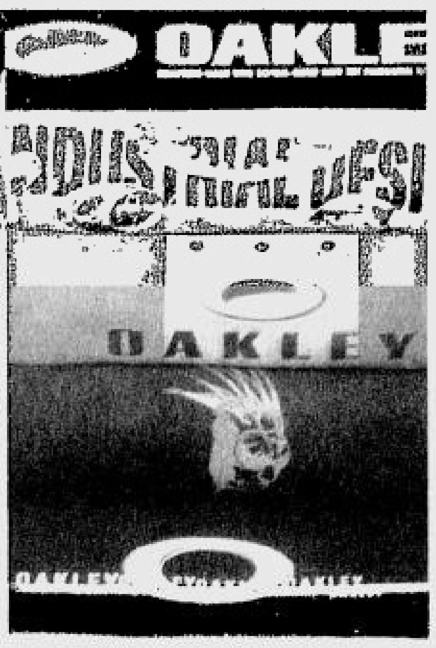
Just in time for Christmas

EVER wondered how you'd look like wearing Diether Ocampo's shades? How do you think would it feel to run in Brad Turvey's shoes? Dream no more because Oakley is turning your wishes into reality.

Oakley has turned a simple garage into a room full of products sold at very affordable prices. From Dec. 16 to 19, rummage through the assortment of Oakley eyewear, footwear and apparel that will suit your personality.

Oakley continues its commitment of providing its consumers everything they need to fit their chosen lifestyle. Designed to enhance and reinforce performance, Oakley footwear are made of top grain leather for breathable comfort and durability. Oakley apparel, on the other hand, is designed to be highly resistant to abrasion, making it tough and durable under extraneous circumstances. Its moisture wicking fabric draws moisture away from the skin, giving the wearer a fresh and dry feeling all throughout. Oakley eyewear has likewise established its mark in the industry. Oakley eyepieces are more than the fashionable ones you wear, they are the kind that provide you utmost comfort and secure fit, no matter how extreme your activities may be.

Be a part of the Oakley circle. Drop by Meera Enterprises located at the Jazra Building, Estrella Street corner St. Paul, San Antonio Village, Makati and take a peek at the different products and avail yourself of the best buys. For more information, call 890-0228.



Songs of the Season at the Power Plant Mall

CHRISTMAS is definitely in the air, and with it comes great tidings of joy. This holiday feast of the senses gives people a sense of nostalgia that comes with the indulgence in gazing at eye candy displays on the streets and in the malls, appeasing their appetite with mouth-watering delicacies, and tuning in to wonderful Christmas carols.

This season of joy, Power Plant Mall gives patrons respite from the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations with "Songs of the Season" Christmas Caroling.

"Songs of the Season" features a host of seasoned performers who will render the best of Christmas carols ranging from classical music to pop, jazz, and R&B. Among them are special event mood-setters, Bernie Pasamba String Ensemble, Da Capo, and Soulful Moodstrings and highly acclaimed amateur chorale groups from International School Manila, British School Manila, and Technological Institute of the Philippines.

This Christmas offering also presents special performances by home-grown multi-awarded chorale groups, A consort of Voices, Bukas Palad, Hangad, and Helm Chorale, with their own rendition of Christmas carols.

And on Dec. 21, Noel Cabangon brings his signature music to Power Plant Mall with an acoustic rendition of soulful Christmas songs that will make your Christmas complete.

Catch "Songs of the Season" at the Ground Level, North Court of the Power Plant Mall starting Dec. 1.

A New Fiesta Carnival opens

CHRISTMAS is just around the corner and the Araneta Center gets the festive mood going with the New Fiesta Carnival opening this December.

For almost 30 years, the Fiesta Carnival has been the center of family amusement. Now relocated near Araneta Coliseum and beside Value Station, the New Fiesta Carnival promises to be the number one family recreational destination for fun this holiday as it offers over 10 exciting rides and three gaming places, all packed in an adventurous tree-lined environment. Get hyped for the return of the ultimate fiesta at the Araneta.

Get a load of rides that will have one screaming for more with the spine-chilling Roller Coaster, get wet with a canoe ride, or hop on an adventure on the high seas with the Viking Ship. Bump it up with family and friends on the Bump Cars, or take to the skies with the Mini Jet.

Spend some quality time with a buddy or relative and take a spin on the Carousel and shout "All aboard!" as the Mini Train is set to make tracks. Get some gaming pleasure and test those skills at JS and VCC Amusement Place with basketball, video games and for the singer in all of us, some good old videoke fun. Practice that sharp shooting eye at the shooting gallery and get to win some fabulous prizes.

Have a ball and bring the family to a real fiesta this December at the new and improved Fiesta Carnival, open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are priced at an affordable P30 per ride and P6 for gaming tickets.

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- Be our top spender and win BIG prizes like TV sets, home entertainment systems, microcomponents and more.
- Spend at least PhP 1,000 at any Robinsons mall and get a chance to take home instant prizes.
- Simply submit your sales slip at the Citibank Booth. If you are the top-spender, you get a chance to win the bi-weekly prize!

Schedule of Bi-Weekly Prizes	Deadline of Submission of Entries	Prizes
Nov. 22, 2003 to Dec. 7, 2003	Dec. 7, 2003 6pm	One(1) winner per mall of Pioneer Home Theater (Model #MTD7DVD)
Dec. 8, 2003 to Dec. 21, 2003	Dec. 21, 2003 6pm	One(1) winner per mall of a Philips 25" (63.5cms) Flat TV (Model#25T4232)
Dec. 22, 2003 to Jan. 4, 2004	Jan. 4, 2004 6pm	One(1) winner per mall of a Whirlpool Refrigerator (Model#WBM 35-12)
Jan. 5, 2004 to Jan. 18, 2004	Jan. 18, 2004 6pm	One(1) winner per mall of a Sony Mini-DVD (Model#NHCKV 990D)

So do your Christmas shopping at Robinsons now!

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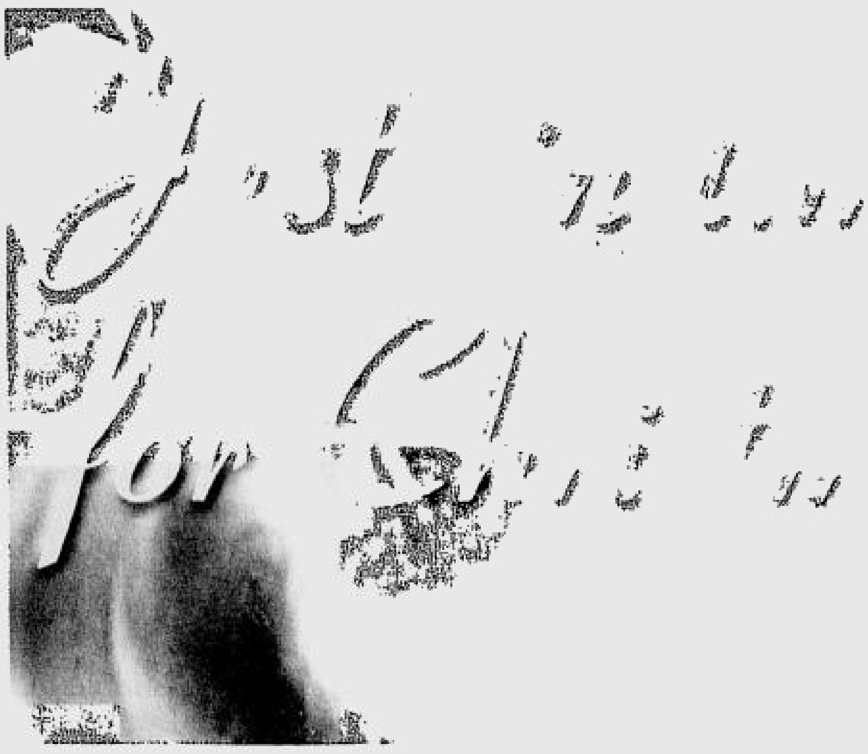

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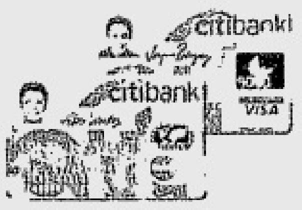


Promo runs from Nov. 22, 2003 to Jan. 18, 2004.

Citibank Redemption Booths are located at the following Robinsons branches: ERMITA L1 in front of Black Shop • GALLERIA L2 center railing in front of Ang Gara • METRO EAST L2 railing in front of RDS • PAMPANGA L1 hallway in front of Pancake House and Kenny Rogers • CEBU Activity Area

See flyers, call CitiPhone at 995-9999, or log on to www.citibank.com.ph for more details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4962, Series of 2003.

citibank

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

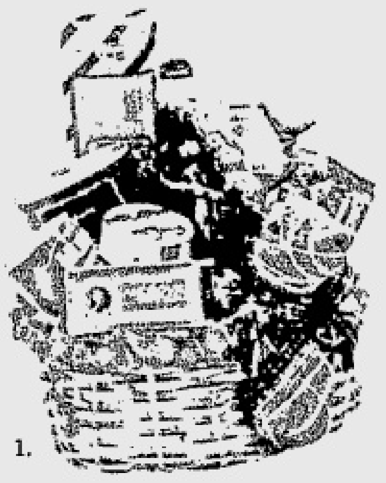
Baskets of cheer from SM Supermarket

CHRISTMAS gift baskets filled with goodies and good cheer remain one of the favorite holiday presents of all time.

And in the season of giving, SM Supermarket has a delightful assortment of gift baskets that bring on the merriment with their attractive packaging and tempting treats. The best part is the price—all these range from P185 to P2,500.

There is a gift basket for everyone—for pasta lovers, for noche Buena preparations—even packages of bonus items. All these are creatively fashioned in baskets, buckets and sleighs with festive ribbons, stars and ornaments.

The Holiday Gift Baskets are available at SM Supermarket branches. For more inquiries, visit any of the SM Supermarket's customer service counters or log on at www.supermarket.com.



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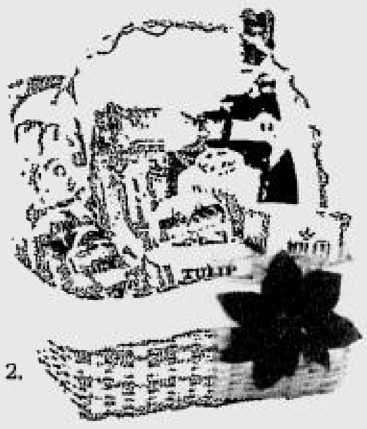

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1. **GIFT** ideas for busy people. P1,500 worth of assorted goodies available at selected SM Supermarket branches.
2. **SM SUPERMARKET'S** Holiday Gift Basket can go for as low as P800
3. **GIFTS** in a barrel. includes Taster's Choice Coffee, Filippo Berio Olive Oil, pasta, sauces, fruits, wine, chips cookies, Toblerone and Pate. P1,200
4. **A BOUNTIFUL** basket of Del Monte products for only P185.
5. **DEL MONTE'S** pizza pasta package. Includes pasta, sauces, pineapple tidbits, fruits, salad cream and cheese. P300
6. **A GREAT** gift suggestion. Del Monte 'merienda cena' package. P400
7. **A NOCHE** Buena treat. Del Monte's Noche Buena package is an assortment of sauces, marinades, juices, pasta and fruits for Christmas dinner only for P500

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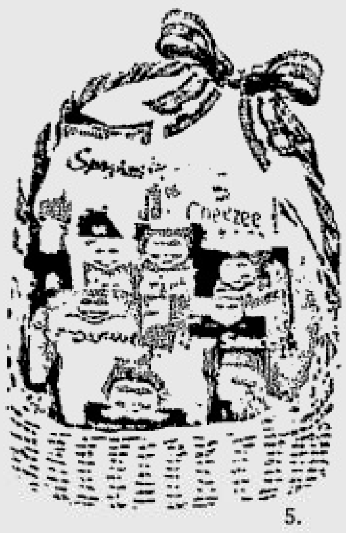

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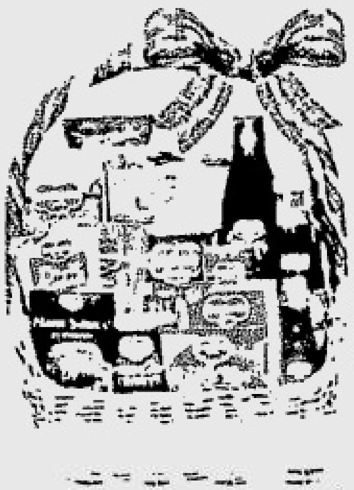

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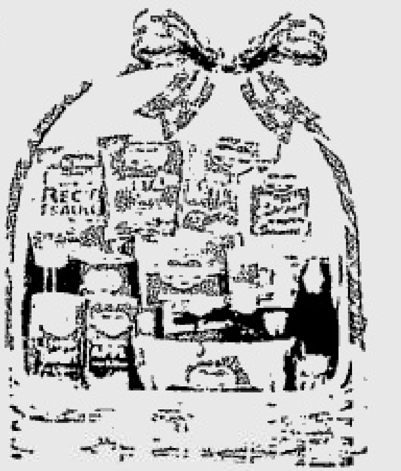

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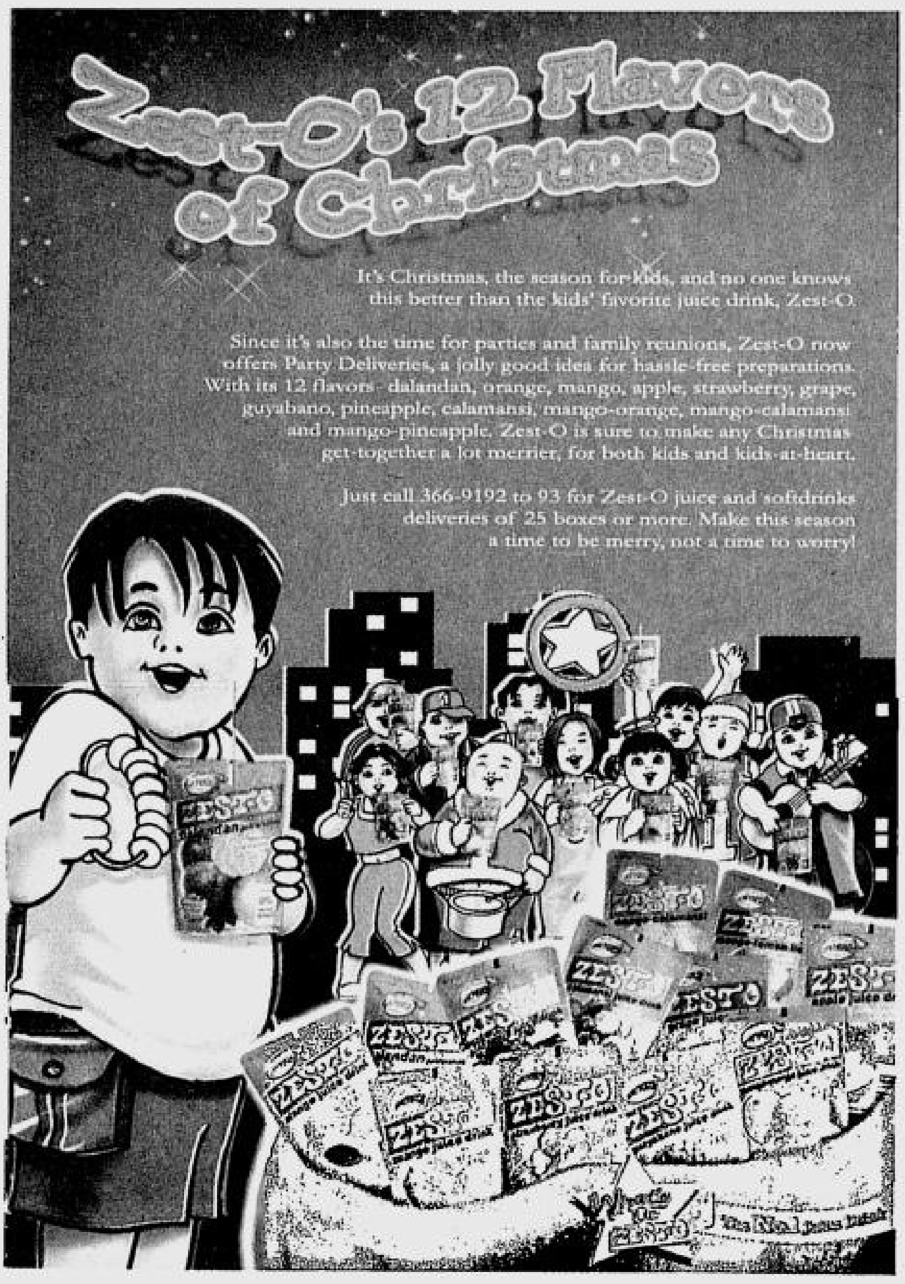
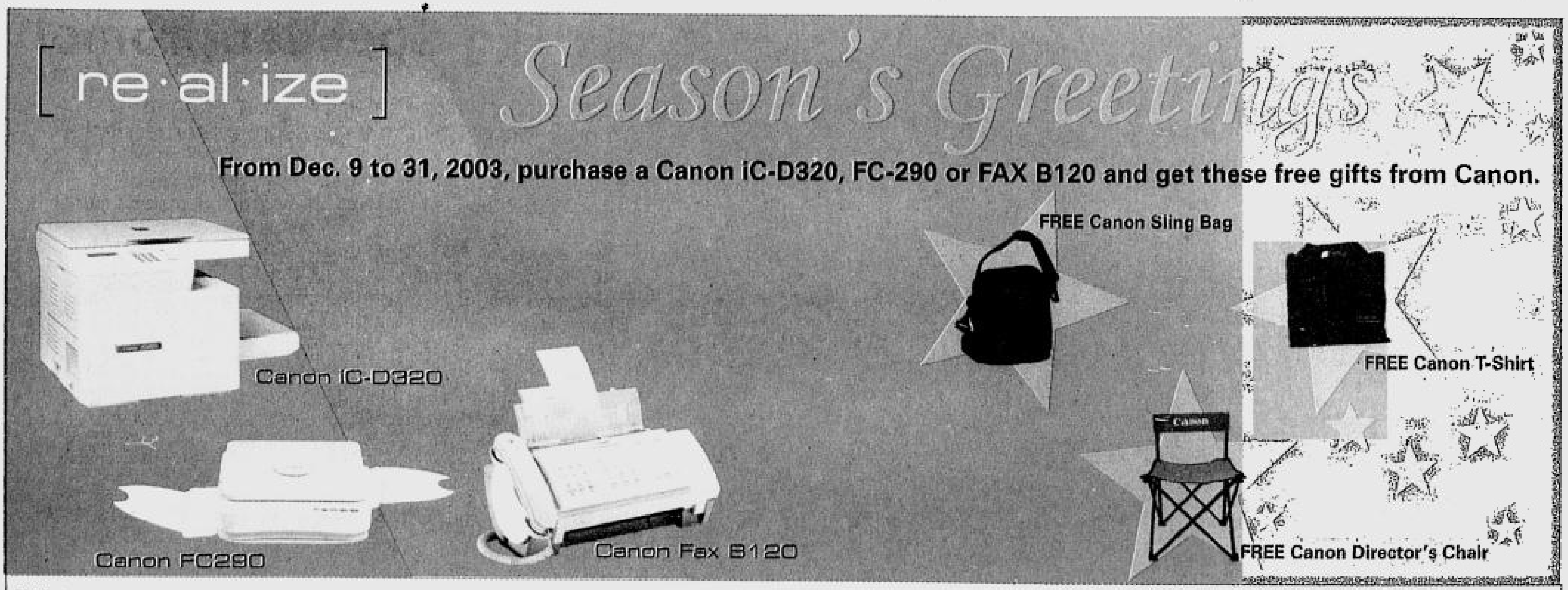


Zest-O's 12 Flavors of Christmas

It's Christmas, the season for kids, and no one knows this better than the kids' favorite juice drink, Zest-O.

Since it's also the time for parties and family reunions, Zest-O now offers Party Deliveries, a jolly good idea for hassle-free preparations. With its 12 flavors- dalandan, orange, mango, apple, strawberry, grape, guyabano, pineapple, calamansi, mango-orange, mango-calamansi and mango-pineapple. Zest-O is sure to make any Christmas get-together a lot merrier, for both kids and kids-at-heart.

Just call 366-9192 to 93 for Zest-O juice and softdrinks deliveries of 25 boxes or more. Make this season a time to be merry, not a time to worry!



[re·al·ize] Season's Greetings

From Dec. 9 to 31, 2003, purchase a Canon iC-D320, FC-290 or FAX B120 and get these free gifts from Canon.

FREE Canon Sling Bag

FREE Canon T-Shirt

FREE Canon Director's Chair

Canon iC-D320

Canon FC290

Canon Fax B120

Distributor
GLEE ELECTRONICS Tel #: 7277017-19 / 7441371-76

CANON Business Alliance Partners (CBAP)
MAKATI: Ace Philippines 810-4942/810-5003 * Compex-Park Square 892-8382 to 84 * Copystar 899-7101 to 04/899-7045 * Infoworx 870-8477/870-8479/898-3356 to 57 * Micropacific Technologies 840-4563/840-4787 * Pasadena Technologies 897-6267/897-7734 * Personal Computer 819-5106 to 09/892-2906 to 07 * Prodata System 894-1570 to 71 * Superlane 757-2891 * Tetra Technologies 897-1319/897-1394/896-2197 * Villman 892-2222 * WTC Trading Corp 899-0351/899-0352 MANILA: Acrotech Microdevices 781-8245 to 48 * Advance Solution 526-4067/526-4130 * Compex-Tutuban 253-1615 * Compex-SM Manila 400-4677 * Compex-Robinsons Ermita 528-4337/5368027 * Copytrade 740-8155 to 56 * Nextwave Communication 245-7681/309-1814 to 15 * Officeman 245-1217/18 * Solid Business Machines 241-4094 to 96 * Total Quality Machines 526-4503/536-3241/526-4555 QUEZON CITY: Compex Cyberzone-SM North 253-1615 * Compex International 711-0208 * Compex-Robinsons Galleria 632-7163 * Compex-SM North Edsa 920-4610 * Fe-rol Marketing 929-8144/929-1982 * Zenshin Systems Corp. 365-0536 ORTIGAS/PASIG: Compex SM Megamall 633-1860 to 61 * Compex.Com-Megamall 632-7974/6327986 * Compucare Center 722-9783/722-0221 * Fax Cable 637-5483 to 84 /722-1526/726-2806 * Infopro 721-5250/721-9346 to 48 * Pacific Office Machines 722-6970 * Xytrix Systems Corp. 916-5212 ALABANG/CALABARZON Compex-SM Southmall 806-6764 * Compex-Festival Supermall 850-3654 to 55 CALABARZON: Cagnet Computer Shop 043-921-1605/921-1660 * Compex-Bacoor Cavite 046-502-2077 * Compex-SM Sucat 825-4467 * MSC Data Exchange System 049-562-6006/562-7342 * RHS Copy Master 736-0031 BACOLOD CITY: Technology One 920911167 * Negros Computer Sales: 034-433-0789 * Hardy Computer 034-433-6705 * Tenghua 034-434-4588 * IEC Computer 034-434-3249 DUMAGUETE CITY: DGTech 0917-7416261 * InfoMate Computer 035-8554715 * AAC 035-226-1264 CEBU CITY: Ng Khai Computer: 032-346-2926 * Bismac 032-253-7973 * CompuMaster 032-255-1622 * Electroworld 032-345-2788 DIPOLOG CITY SECC Computer 919-430-2046 * Natcom 919-342-1186 BOHOL Exceltec Computer 038-411-2067 * B&J Computer 038-411-4110 BUTUAN: Vitalink Enterprise 919-436-2756 ILIGAN: Malta Trading 063-221-7188 CAGAYAN DE ORO: Microtrade GMC 08822-313456 * Bismac 08822-722469 * Mitech Business Automation Corp. 088-856-4119 TACLOBAN CITY: UNISA 0917-306-1568 ILOILO: Bismac 033-882-3355 CAUAYAN, ISABELA: Professional Computer Inc. 078-652-0970 * LAOAG CITY: Northpoint Computer TUGUEGARAO CITY: 0917-3546302 LA UNION: PC 4 Me Computer 072-888-0873 DAGUPAN CITY: Bitstop Computer - 075-522-0092 LEGASPI CITY: Danvers Computer Shoppe 052-480-7337 * Bitstop, Inc. 052-480-3888 NAGA CITY: 3GX Computer Solution 054-473-4968 * Boning's Trading 054-811-1111 VIRAC, CATANDUANES: Tri-Dom Trading - 052-811-2115 MASBATE CITY: 052-333-4880 GENERAL SANTOS: Kala Office Store 083-552-5601 DAVAO CITY: Emcor Inc. 082-222-1119 COTABATO CITY: WPC Computer Hauz 064-421-7588

CANON MARKETING PHILS. INC.
HEAD OFFICE, MAKATI 812-6047 * CEBU 032-345-3821 * DAVAO: 082-227-4820 LA UNION 072-242-0440 LEGASPI 052-480-6331 * SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA 045-961-6496

Canon

per DTI-NCR permit no. 5136 series of 2003

FIRST BRITTANY FOOTBALL CUP
Little Leaguers go big time at the 1st Brittany Football Cup held at the La Posada Activity Area Oct. 5. Shown in pre-game warm-ups is the Manila Soccer Academy (MSA) team with its team captain. The vast, breezy green fields and masterfully planned La Posada, overlooking Laguna de Bay, proved to be the perfect venue for the meet, participated in by 7 prestigious teams for age 10 and under, namely: Manila Soccer Academy (MSA), International Christian Academy (ICA), The Learning Child FC, Nomads FC, Southridge, Statefield and Futbol Funatics. ICA won the coveted cup, with Nomads FC and Southridge in second and third place respectively. Interested in experiencing La Posada? Call 850-2868 or 850-6986, or log on to www.brittany.com.ph

GIVE
this Christmas!
Nov 22, '03 – Jan 4, '04

WATSONS 'I CARE BEAR'
Snowy white, cuddly and sporting the colors of the season Watsons 'I Care Bear' highlights the 'Give this Christmas!' Theme. The item is available at any one of the 80 branches of Watsons Personal Care Stores. Also available at great prices are 'giftable plush' toys including Garfield, musical teddies, floppy puppies, musical swinging monkeys and huggable brown bears.

'GIFTABLE PLUSH' TOYS
Newly arrived plush toys—ideal gifts for Christmas— are available at great prices at Watsons. Topping the collection are Garfield the Cat, the lovable cartoon character familiar to young and old alike, musical Santas, floppy puppies, musical swinging monkeys, mini teddies with cheeks that light up at the press of a button and huggable big bears. Holiday shoppers may avail themselves of these great value buys at any of over 80 branches of Watsons Personal Care Stores.

A ham that is 100% delicious

THE ART of ham-making dates back hundred years ago in both the East and the West. In ancient China where peasants only ate pork on special occasions, giving a leg of ham was a gesture of friendship and respect. Historians say that in Medieval Europe, hams were served on banquet feasts of kings, knights and noblemen.

It is not exactly known when and how ham became an indispensable holiday delicacy for the Filipinos. But the fact remains the seasonal hams contribute a big chunk of the meat processing business during the Yuletide.

CDO, a meat processing company known for its Holiday Ham, tells us the process how hams are made delectable. And what makes the CDO Holiday Ham 100 percent delicious?

It starts with the stringent selection of pork leg meats wherein the company's quality assurance personnel evaluate the meats physically, chemically and microbiologically.

"We see to it that all meat materials come from slaughterhouses that are accredited with the National Meat Inspection Commission (NMIC) of the Department of Agriculture," declares Amy D. Cuna, CDO vice president for manufacturing.

"After the selection of meat, trimming follows," Amy notes. It is a process wherein the unwanted parts of the meat such as the ligaments, skin and bone excess fats are being trimmed off.

The trimmed meat is flavored using brine solution using through an automatic injector machine. The brine solution is pumped and distributed evenly into the whole muscle ham to enhance color and flavor.

After the injection process, the pork leg meat is kept in a curing room with a controlled temperature. The condition allows the curing ingredients to react with meat pigments resulting in a pinkish red color meat.

When the meat is already cured, it undergoes massaging in a tumbler machine or massager. The meat is tenderized gently without rupturing the meat muscle thereby retaining its juiciness and flavor.

The massaged meat is then stuffed with a net to form the shape of the ham. The "netted" ham is "smoked" in a hot chamber with a controlled humidity and temperature for a certain period.

This process helps to prolong the shelf life of the ham. The smoked ham is cooked using a special solution that further improves the taste of ham. This process differentiates CDO Holiday Ham from the rest.

"Our hams are fully cooked in a secret solution to boost the flavor and aroma," said Amy. This process also makes our hams ready-to-serve, unlike other hams in the market that need to be cooked before serving.

The ham is cooled in a chiller before denetting, a process where deforming net is removed.

The cooked ham is glazed with sugar and subjected to high temperature for the sugar to caramelize. This adds up to the flavor and appetizing look of the ham.

After glazing, the ham is packed using a vacu-thermal pouch to seal in the freshness of the product.

The packed ham is stored in a chiller for immediate cooling down of temperature prior to distribution.

The company's shipping and delivery personnel, with the use of refrigerated vans, transport the hams to customers.

ADVT.

cdo Holiday HAM

100% done.
100% delicious.

SELECTED.
MEATS WERE METICULOUSLY CHOSEN USING STRICTEST STANDARDS.

TRIMMED.
THE BEST OF THE MEATS WERE RETAINED.

FLAVORED.
GENEROUSLY SEASONED FOR THAT GREAT TASTE AND COLOR.

TENDERIZED.
MADE DELECTABLE TO STIR YOUR APPETITE.

SMOKED.
QUALITY MEATS WERE WELL-PRESERVED BY TRADITIONAL, SUPERIOR STANDARDS

COOKED.
EXPERTLY PREPARED IN SPECIAL FORMULA.

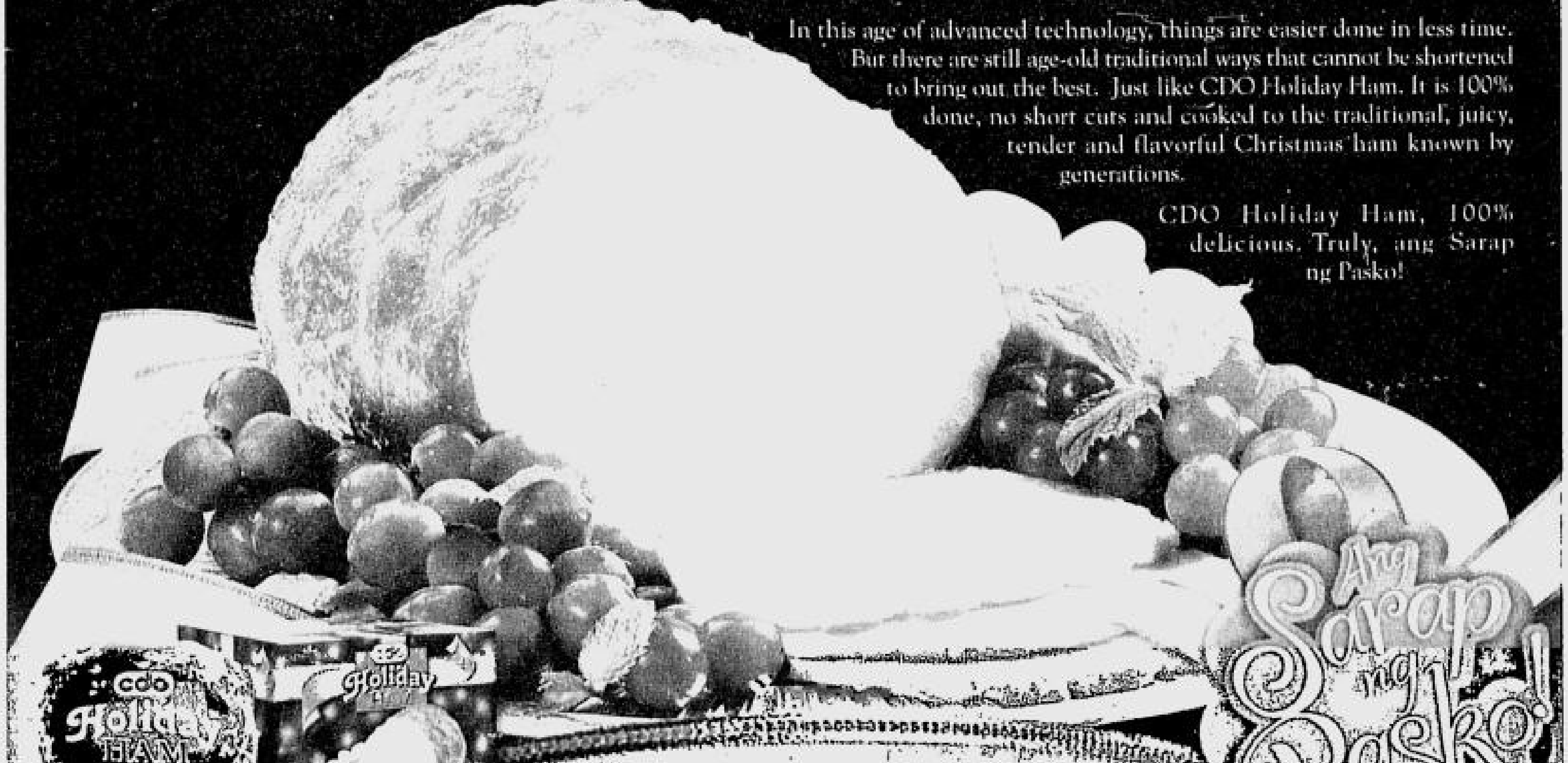
CHILLED.
COOLED TO BRING OUT THE BEST AFTER PREPARATION.

GLAZED.
DELIGHTFULLY COATED WITH SUGAR AND ADDED WITH PINEAPPLE GLAZE FOR THAT WELL-LOVED HAM TASTE.

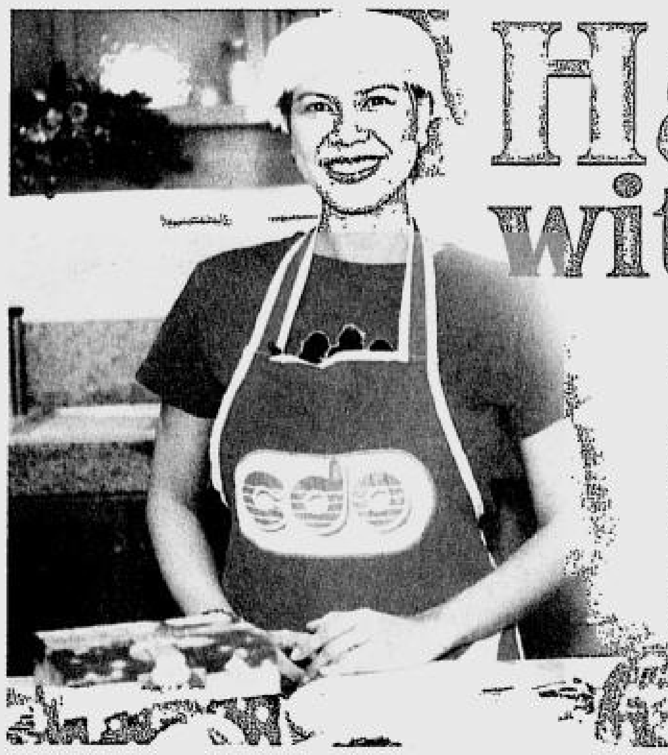
SEALED.
TO KEEP FRESH.

In this age of advanced technology, things are easier done in less time. But there are still age-old traditional ways that cannot be shortened to bring out the best. Just like CDO Holiday Ham. It is 100% done, no short cuts and cooked to the traditional, juicy, tender and flavorful Christmas ham known by generations.

CDO Holiday Ham, 100% delicious. Truly, ang Sarap ng Pasko!



FOODSPHERE, INC.
560 West service road, Paso de blas, Valenzuela City
Email: marketing@cdo.com.ph Website: www.cdo.com.ph
Tel. 2941111



Hamming it up with Suzi

THE ART of ham making dates back hundreds of years.

In ancient China, where peasants ate pork only on special occasions, giving a leg of ham was a gesture of friendship and respect. Culinary practitioners say that in Medieval Europe, hams were served on banquet feasts of kings, knights and noblemen.

It is not exactly known when and how ham became an indispensable holiday delicacy for Filipinos. But the fact remains that specialty hams contribute a big chunk of the meat processing business during the Yuletide.

CDO-Foodsphere Inc, an industry pillar which has carved a niche for its 100-percent delicious CDO Holiday Ham, gives us an array of innovative ways to enjoy your ham.

CDO has sponsored a series of cooking segments in "Unang Hirit", the popular morning show of GMA 7. The segment runs until Dec. 19. For inquiries, call 294-1111.

The segment titled "CDO Holiday Ham. And "Sarap ng Pasko with Suzi" features a fine selection of Holiday Ham recipes with noted TV host Suzi Entrata-Abrera as host.

The segment will also showcase different preparations of CDO Holiday Ham for your Noche Buena and other Yuletide feasts.

Among the dishes featured are Holiday Ham with Apple and Prune Sauce, Holiday Ham with Asian Sauce and Holiday Ham with Cranberry-Cherry Glaze.

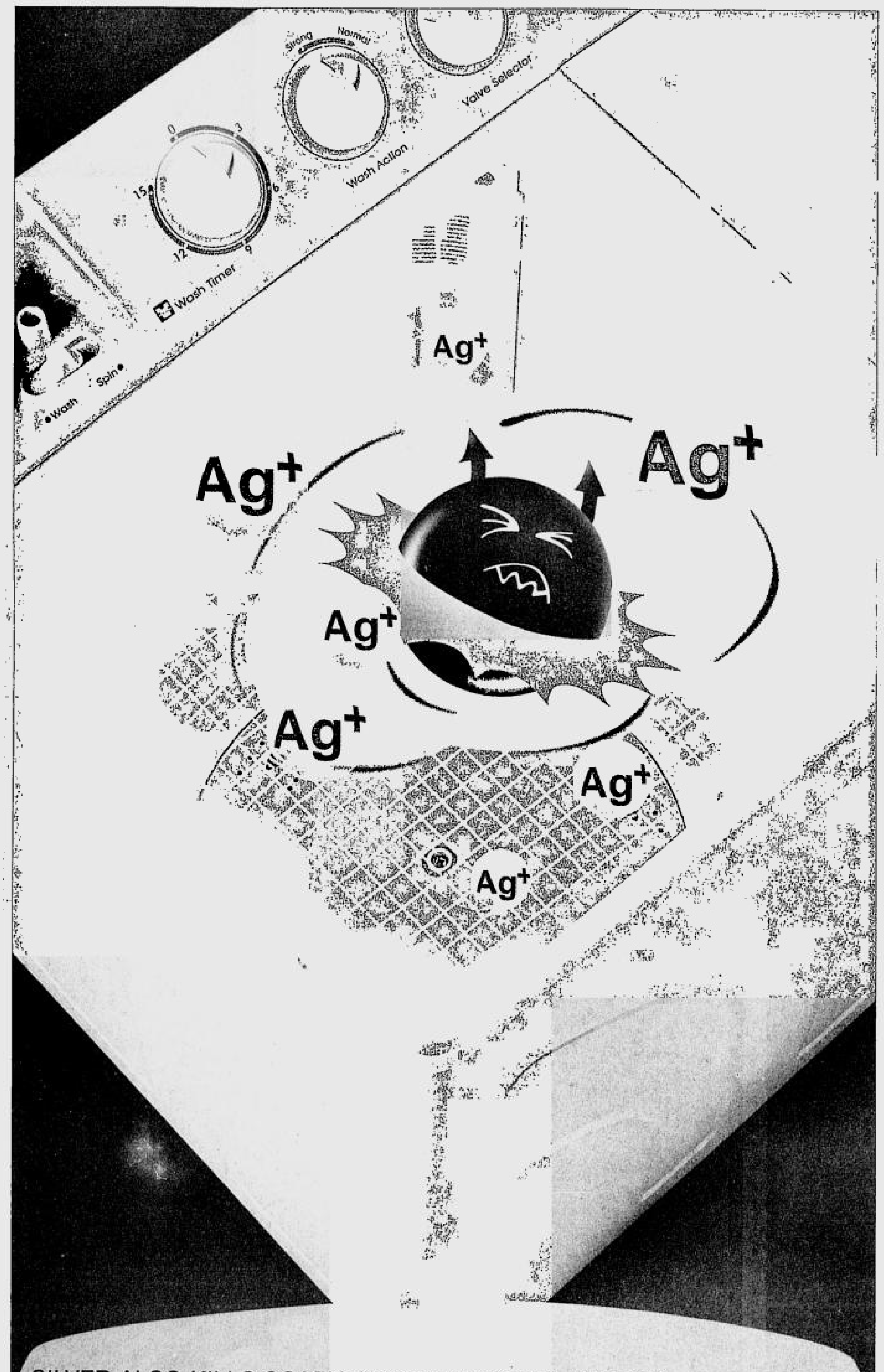
"It's a special campaign aimed to educate the homemakers and culinary enthusiasts," said Ana Uranza, CDO product specialist.

"We want to demonstrate the versatility of ham in terms of recipe application contrary to the old perception that hams are just for sandwich fills," she said.

Each episode will teach viewers the easy and cost-efficient way to prepare nutritious recipes using a 100-percent delicious ham.

"This educational program is in line with the company's vision to provide healthy and affordable food to the Filipino consumer," said Uranza.

As additional incentives for the homemakers, CDO is giving away free Holiday Ham recipes.

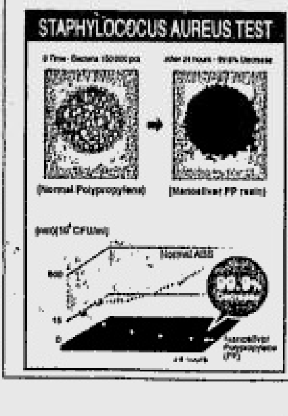


SILVER ALSO KILLS SCARY GERMS IN YOUR LAUNDRY.

The new Daewoo Washing Machine is the first-ever washing machine to use Nanosilver Technology to disinfect clothes as you wash them. This revolutionary technology kills over 650 kinds of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites in your laundry. killing 99.9% of microorganisms that can make your precious loved ones sick!

And its durable polypropylene body ensures the new Daewoo Washing Machine will keep your laundry Nanosilver clean for years to come.

DAEWOO
GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY

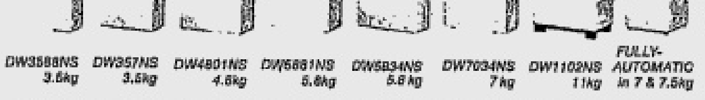


HOW DOES NANOSILVER TECHNOLOGY WORK?

Silver contains natural disinfecting and antibiotic properties. It has been used in silverware and cooking utensils for centuries because the ancients found out that silver prevented food from spoiling.

This happens because when silver comes in contact with microorganisms such as bacteria, virus and fungi, it acts on an enzyme in those microorganisms to destroy their ability to breathe, digest nutrients, and reproduce. In other words, silver chokes and starves bacteria, viruses and fungi to death.

Nanosilver particles are silver particles that are one-billionth of a meter in size. These minute particles retain silver's natural antibiotic and odor-suppressing properties. Daewoo mixes Nanosilver with the plastic resin used in washing machine pulsators to give you laundry that's 99.9 percent bacteria- and odor-free.



Available at all leading appliance stores nationwide. For inquiries, call 633-2906.

Disney on Ice Presents Beauty and the Beast for the Holiday season

GROUP sales for the year's highly anticipated family event are already picking up as "Disney On Ice Presents Beauty and the Beast" nears its two-week run starting on Dec. 23 at the Araneta Coliseum.

One of the early ticket holders is Miriam College Grade School, which encourages students, alumnae and their families to watch the Dec. 27, 4:30 p.m. show at the Araneta Coliseum.

The spectacular production on ice features the enchanting Disney classic and the familiar characters from the animated movie. Expect to see the beautiful Belle, Cogsworth, Lumiere, Little Chip, Mrs. Pots and the rest of the cast. Be captivated with the Academy Award-winning compositions of Alan Menken, which include sing-along sensations like "Be Our Guest", "Belle" and none other than the Academy Award-winning song "Beauty and the Beast".

Families are in for a special treat, as the show features state-of-the-art lighting and special effects to produce that hard-to-capture Disney magic with some of the best crew and cast of internationally renowned figure skaters.

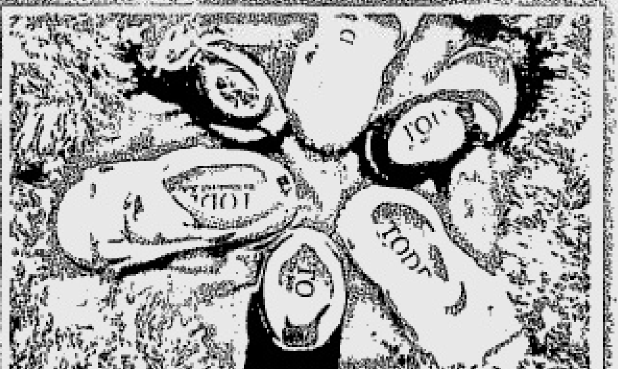
Other schools can also buy tickets by calling United Productions Inc. Tickets are also available at TicketNet (911-5555). Prices range from P314 to P1,202 for VIP seats. Buy now to get the best seats and be part of the magic.

MIRIAM COLL
ADE SCHOOL

SEATED, from left, are Aurea Sarmiento, Miriam College Grade School faculty president; Aina Lluz, Uniprom Inc marketing manager; and Ma. Corazon Reyes, PhD, Miriam College Grade School principal. Standing, from left, are Janette Fajardo, Grade School chair and Marissa Peralta, PTC executive board president/committee ways and means chair.

HIMIG MUNTINLUPA CHORALE GROUP AT METROPOLIS STAR

The Himig Muntinlupa Chorale Group performed Christmas carols for all shoppers of Metropolis Star Alabang during the ceremonial lighting of a 20-foot Christmas tree at the Lower Ground Atrium of the mall this November. The Christmas tree was sponsored by Jollibee Foods Corp with two stores at the mall.



COMFORT AND JOY

The Christmas elves at Striders USA have been busy working on their new Holiday Collection of children's and toddlers' shoes. Style-smart leather shoes with that magical blend of fashion and functionality are sure to delight both parents and children. Because growing toddlers' and children's feet perspire twice as much as adult feet, it is important to give them leather shoes that are soft, natural, breathable and create the most comfortable and healthy environment for growing feet. Striders children and toddler's shoes are sold at the shoe section of SM North Edsa, Cubao, Megamall, Makati, Las Piñas, Manila, Bicutan, Fairview, Bacoor (Cavite), San Fernando (Pampanga) and Mandurriao (Ilo-ilo) in the Visayas and soon to open SM Lucena.

Christmas cheap and chic at Festival Supermall

IF YOU'RE shopping for a legion of friends, relatives, family members, officemates, and of course, your godchildren, it's not going to be a shock if you will spend a fortune or blow your 13th or even 14th month bonus without spending a thing for yourself.

So to keep within your budget for gift giving, here are some cheap and chic gift ideas (between P50 to P995) from Festival Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang:

At Great Value Store on Level 2, the chic yet affordable faux art pieces made of resin start at P530. The store also sells interesting ball-shaped elephants good for decorating accents at only P150 for a set of 6 pieces.

Substance on Level 4 offers great-looking but reasonably priced Asian décor items. Well-crafted vases start at P575 up, masks from Bali at P295 up, an elegant tea light holder at P475 (big) and P345 (small), a "Globe" cup holder at P995, Chinese metal bells at P575 (short) and P650 (long), tribal and Egyptian pharaoh décor plates with stand at P825, and a Balinese candle house at P795.

Elegant and sleek decorative pieces are a steal at Play & Display on Level 3. Its Mexican vases called Las Floras go for P100 each, while the Las Ollas flower holders are priced at P150 (small) and P290 (big).

At The Barnyard on Level 4, grab some of its country-inspired storage items like a rattan picnic basket at P481, gugu utility tray at P445 and Sumera square storage piece at P640. Export-quality terra cotta vases start at P450 at Melquiades in Décor Plus on Level 4.

At Terra Cotti on Level 2, choose from the wide array of fashionable China-made fans laden with Zen-inspired designs and subtle colors at P150 each. Home accessories like a set of baby Buddha in cute poses at P550 (3 pieces) and P350 (2 pieces) should make interesting conversation pieces.

Thai products also abound in this Oriental haven: hair stick at P100, a chopstick set consisting of five pairs at P250, throw pillow covers at P400 (with beadwork) and P200 (plain), hand massager at P50, and elephant- and turtle-shaped throw pillows at P300 each. For the Pinoy-themed kitchen, a cup and saucer hanging décor piece at P150 beams with creativity.

These are just some of the many chic and cheap choices for Christmas gifts at Festival Supermall, the largest shopping, dining and entertainment complex in Southern Metro Manila with over 550 specialty stores and restaurants.

But if you're looking for gifts that will not cost you as much or nothing at all, try giving these really unique gifts:

Personal gift vouchers. For example, you can boost career opportunities of some friends by helping them come up with a professionally written curriculum vita.

Sing a song. Find out your recipient's favorite song and sing it for him or her. It's going to be a touching experience. Or you can give a CD containing his or her most favorite songs if you have a CD burner at home or in the office.

Make it his or her memorable day. For instance, give tickets to the Orchidarium in Manila or any tourist attraction with cheap entrance rates. And to make their day really special, spend it with them.

Make them laugh. Give them a card of hilarious jokes.

Homemade food. Ask them what kind of food they like. Desserts like leche flan and fruit salad are winners.

A good read. There are a lot of books on sale in bookstores starting at P100. But be sure they would really like them.

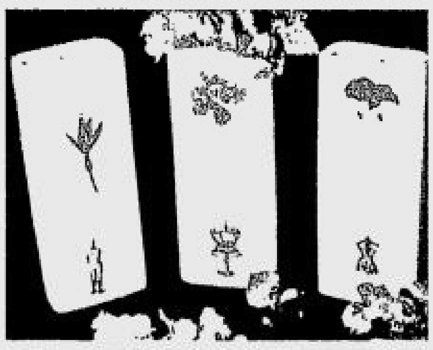
Basket of anything. Get a nice basket and fill it with anything the person likes. It can be cheap but great-tasting local chocolates or sale DVDs or VCDs.

Jar of self-esteem. Fill a jar with little slips of paper that contain nice memories you have of the person, special things they have done, or things about them you admire. Top off with a pretty ribbon and a note that when they feel down, they should take out one of the notes and read it.

Helping hand. Make a card stating that you're willing to give a day's worth of help or labor to the recipient. But say, "One week advance notice please".

Or simply take them out to lunch or movie. What's important is that you give from the heart.

And if you're doing some last-minute shopping this Christmas season, Festival Supermall is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. (until Dec. 23), 10 a.m.to 7 p.m. (Dec. 24), 12 noon to 10 p.m. (Dec. 25), 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Dec. 26 to 30), 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Dec. 31), and 12 noon to 9 p.m. (Jan 1). For more information, call customer service at 850-3514 or visit www.festivalsupermall.com.



CHARMING decor pieces like these Mexican flower holders that go for P100 each are a steal at Play & Display

BALIK MANILA SA PASKO

Manila Pavilion Hotel beckons you to go patriotic this season with the Balik Manila sa Pasko room Package. A P2,500 net single/double occupancy stay entitles you a superior room with free buffet breakfast, free use of the pool and gym, an entrance to Casino Filipino, and a 10 percent discount on food and beverage orders. Plus, get to go home with a hotel souvenir. Stay in Manila this December. Feel how rewarding it is to rediscover over and over again the nation's capital, a place that's both old and new. It is an endearing city that symbolizes the Filipino aspiration. For inquiries and reservations, call 526-1212 extension 2333 or 2343.

Nissin Cup Noodles spreads holiday cheers in Amazing World of Lights and Lanterns

THERE is no stopping Christmas now that the all-time favorite season of the year is just around the corner. This year's yuletide holidays become extra memorable with a visit to Amazing World of Lights and Lanterns at the CCP Complex from Nov. 28 to Jan 11, 2004. Amazing World is the first-ever theme park showcasing the best lanterns from the world-famous Zigong Lantern Show in China. Aside from the dazzling display of lights and brilliant colors, fun rides (which are actually giant lanterns) for the kids, concerts, fashion shows, magic shows and night bazaars, families will get the chance to enjoy the exciting activity booths of Nissin Cup Noodles.

The Nissin Cup Noodles booths offer fun-filled and creative activities such as a "Pick-A-Prize" and drawing area for a Nissin cup design-making contest. Fabulous prizes are also in store for everyone during nightly shows.

What's more, Nissin Cup Noodles are perfect warmers for the Christmas chill. Each cup is complete with real meat and vegetables, adding to flavors exquisitely blended by the world's leader in noodles.

So hurry, join the Amazing World of Lights and Lanterns during this season of happy cheers! And after enjoying the spectacular sights and sounds, treat the whole family with a hot tasty snack of Nissin Cup Noodles!

BELEN COMPETITION WINNER

Mercantile Insurance Co's entry in last year's Intramuros Belen and Lighting Competition won second prize in the Outdoor Belen Division in its interpretation of the theme 'All Join in Prayer for Peace'. This year's competition has for its theme 'Peace and Goodwill to All Men'. The panel of judges, which includes an artist, an architect and a religious, will evaluate the entries based on layout, creativity, illumination and the development of the theme. The competition, which is on its 11th year, is sponsored by the Friends of Intramuros Foundation Inc and the Intramuros administration. Cash and other prizes will be awarded the winners. For more details, call 527-2111 to 13 and ask for Agnes or Donna.

the magic of Christmas AT Araneta Center

Family Appliance SHOWCASE RAFFLE PROMO
2 KITCHEN & 2 ENTERTAINMENT SHOWCASES
Every P500 purchase lets you join!
Promo Period: November 14 to December 25, 2003

15% DISCOUNT ON TICKETS
For December 23 to 29 shows
For a minimum of P300 single purchase
Promo Period: November 14 to December 25, 2003
Disney On Ice Disney's Beauty and the Beast
December 23, 2003 to January 4, 2004
Araneta Coliseum

Araneta Center SALE UP TO 50% OFF on great selections December 26 to 31
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-737 Series of 2003

FREE FAMILY SIZE SHOPPING BAG for every P1,000 purchase
Promo Period: November 14 to December 25, 2003
BONUS
Cut this coupon and get this FREE shopping bag for only P500 purchase

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-738 Series of 2003
See posters for details.

Set for the SEASON

ONLY in the Philippines does Christmas start on the first day of September (four long months before Christmas day itself) and end with the feast of the three kings on the second week of January (just barely over a month from Valentine's Day). Filipinos just love to celebrate. There's something about getting together, exchanging stories and sharing a meal that appeals to the Pinoys' sense of revelry and fun.

Filipinos are unique in the sense that they consider meals a communal activity. Coffee breaks are shared with officemates. Come dinnertime, the entire family has to sit down on the table. Maybe the cliché should be reworded to say "The Family that eats together, stays together."

For the holidays, expect a series of gatherings and feasts to come your way. Chances are, you will also be a host in, at least, one of these occasions. Aside from the food and drinks, another detail that you should not miss is the drama and presentation of your dining table. A well-set table will not only give your guests a good impression but will also dictate the ambiance and mood of the party, ensuring you and your friends will have a good time.

In "The Perfect Setup", interior designer Leo Almeria shares with us some tips on how to jazz up your party setup. On five different occasions, photographers Aldwin Aspillera and Cocoy Sarmenta provide the snapshots and give us an idea of how each setup will look like.

Throw a hacienda breakfast to celebrate December's cool breezy mornings. Invite your "morning person" friends and hold the party in your garden. Make earthy terracotta your key color to complement the green grass and warm sunrise. Plates and silverware can be a lovely mix of items found in flea markets. They'll be great conversation starters. Serve a similar mix of jams, cheese, coffee and fresh fruits. Make your background music smooth jazz or if you're lucky, the chirping of birds as they start their day.

Impress your boss and invite him for a Zen lunch. It's the perfect way to end a long conference meeting, celebrate the acquisition of a large account, or mark a new promotion. Take your guests to your condo unit, a conference room or your building's own rooftop. The affair should be simple, allowing your colleagues to unwind and unclutter their minds after a fast-paced day. make them listen to chill our sounds like the Café del Mar CDs. A quick lunch with a few business deals in play will definitely have executives looking forward to the next time.

With all the wine you'll be getting this Christmas, what better way to sample them all by having a wine-tasting party? Invite your closest friends for some cheese, crackers and a good bottle of wine. Follow this up with a hearty meal of tenderloin tips and potato salad followed by another good bottle of wine. Surround the venue with even greater instrumental classics.

Not all parties have to be big. You can have an intimate merienda or midnight snack with friends who flew in from abroad just for the occasion. The venue doesn't have to be grand either. Place a table in a small corner in your house and use a divider to separate the spot from the rest of your house. Whip up some quick dishes like pasta or spring rolls. Leo shares, "personal visits are a great gift in this modern age of text messages and e-mails. Don't fuss about the preparation. Your guests should be the focus."

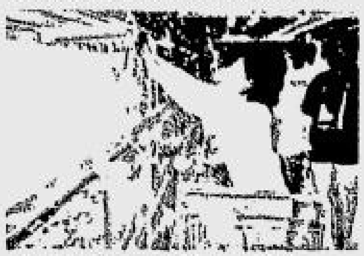
Since Christmas is a time for reunions, why not gather the old gang and get together for an all-boys movie marathon? A comfortable living room outfitted with state-of-the-art home theater system will make the perfect venue. Movie screening starts right after you've filled yourselves with assorted pica-pica or you can opt to serve the meals on square trays and place them on your lap or the floor while eating and watching. The chilled beer and other hard drinks are kept on one side for continued drinking as the night goes on. Play some retro rock and bring back memories of your days of glory.

There are more ways than one to celebrate the season in this month's issue of Lifestyle Asia. Lounge around the cooler days of the month and read about Chavit's Singson quirky ranch, winter fashion and the Filipina that is Bea Zobel. Lifestyle Asia magazine is another prestige publication from the Mega Group - Mega Magazines & Publications Inc. For subscription and more information, call the MMPI office at 631-2859.

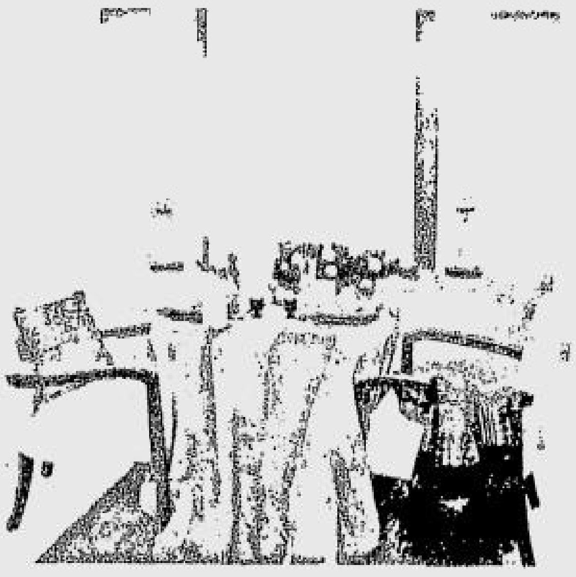
A Nescafé Christmas 'Hakot'

NESCAFÉ, the world's leading coffee brand, treated three lucky drinkers to their annual Hakot Pamasko promo.Three lucky raffle winners got a chance to spend between P25,000 and P100,000 in between 1 and 4 minutes on Nestle products, namely Nescafé's coffée selection, Nido, Nestle cereals, Nesvita, Coffee Mate, Nestea, Milo and others. The hakot was witnessed by Nestle's Michael Tanchanco, Ever Gotesco Ortigas' Janet Alipio and Mike Pergelgemal and Ace Promo representative Che Tan.Ruben Zarriz Jr, 31, amassed a P25,000 hakot with the help of family members who accompanied him that morning. Amazingly, Zarriz and his family sent 100 entries, 10 of which were under his name and one of which won the prize.Melchor Velasco, 33, won a 2-minute, P50,000 hakot which he filled up, also with the help of his family. Velasco intends to sell the Nestle products he and his family won't be able to consume to make extra income this Christmas.But the luckiest of them all was Marissa Gregorio, 35, who grabbed P100,000 worth of products with her family and now intends to put up a store dedicated to Nestle products. Gregorio's star was indeed lucky, having sent only three entries, one of which won the grand prize.

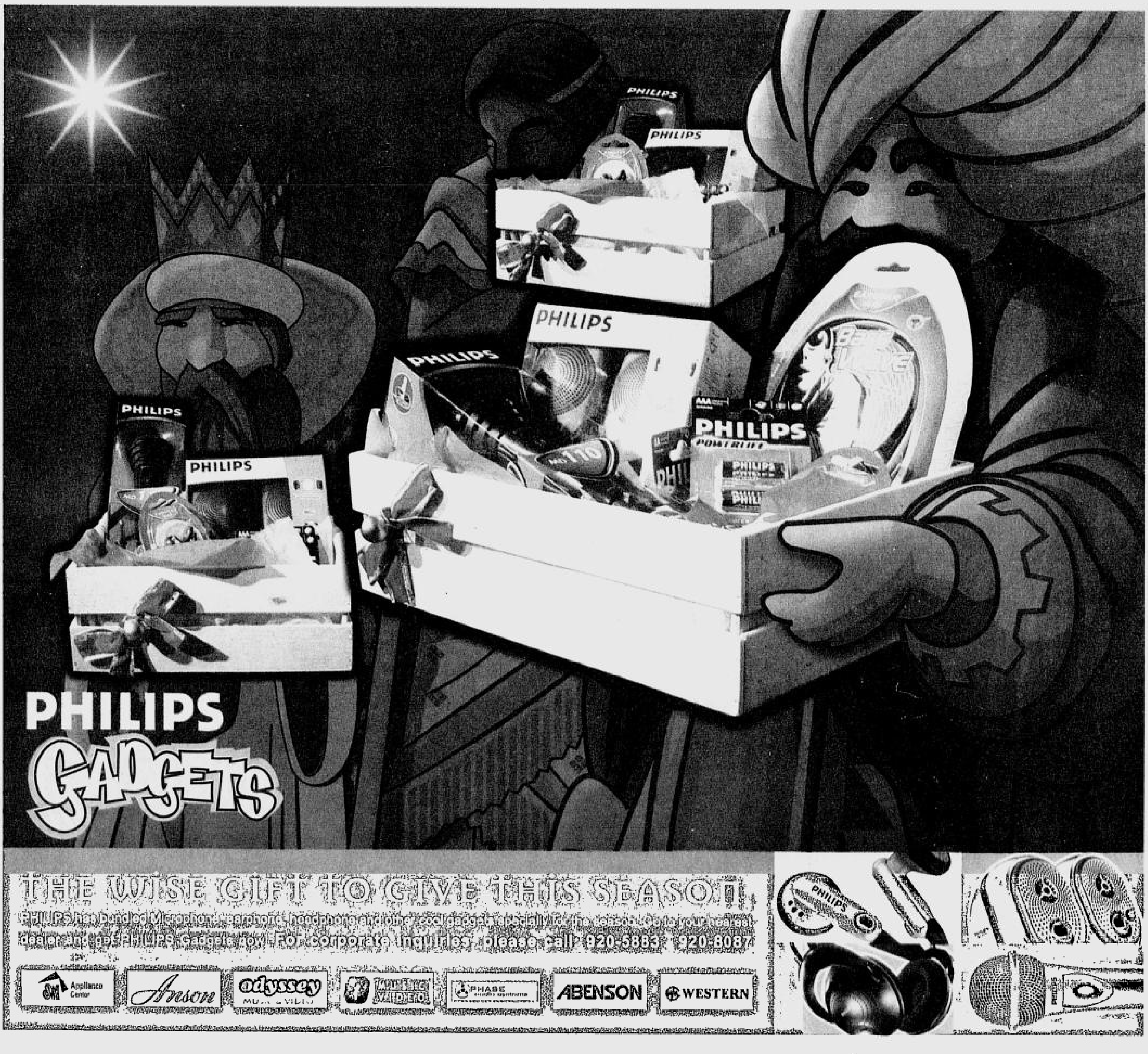
Nescafé Hakot Pamasko's next draw of will be on Dec. 16 while the grand draw will be on Jan. 22, 2004 in "Eat Bulaga" and award an astounding P8 million in total prizes.



MARISSA Seastres Gregorio grabbing P100,000 worth of Nestle products.



THE PERFECT setup is a painting by Aaron Pormarejo, Filipino plaid taffeta/silk tablecloth by Townes Fabric, egg holders from Rustan's, plates and mugs from Cardinal Ceramics; silverware, laminated stone art piece, Bangkok silk oriental pillow, Philippine mahogany chairs, white linen napkins, and black and wood stone lamps with laminated petrified wood. These are all from Abundance.



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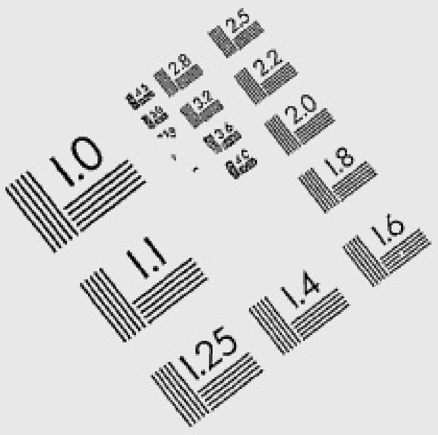
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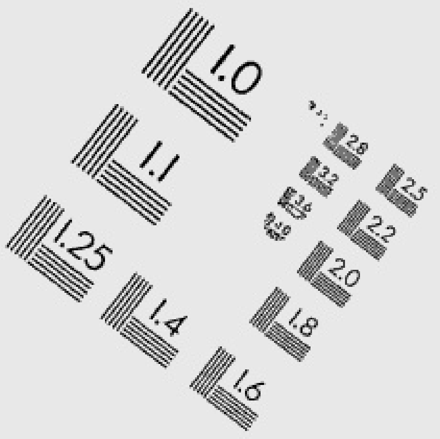
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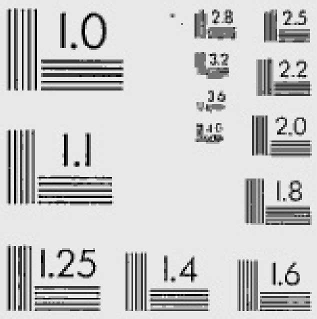
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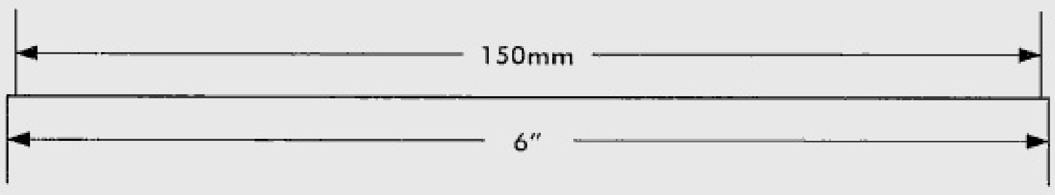

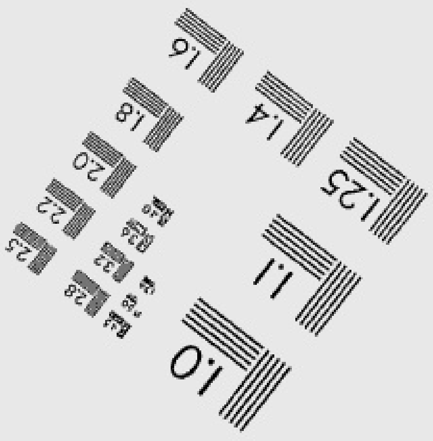
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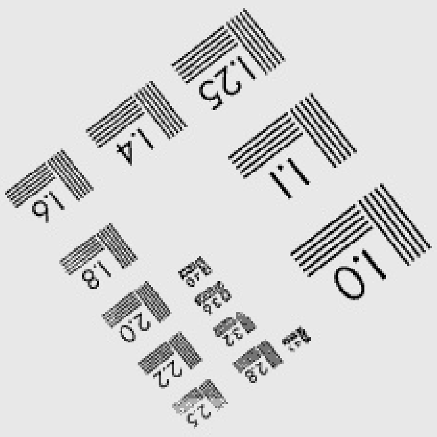
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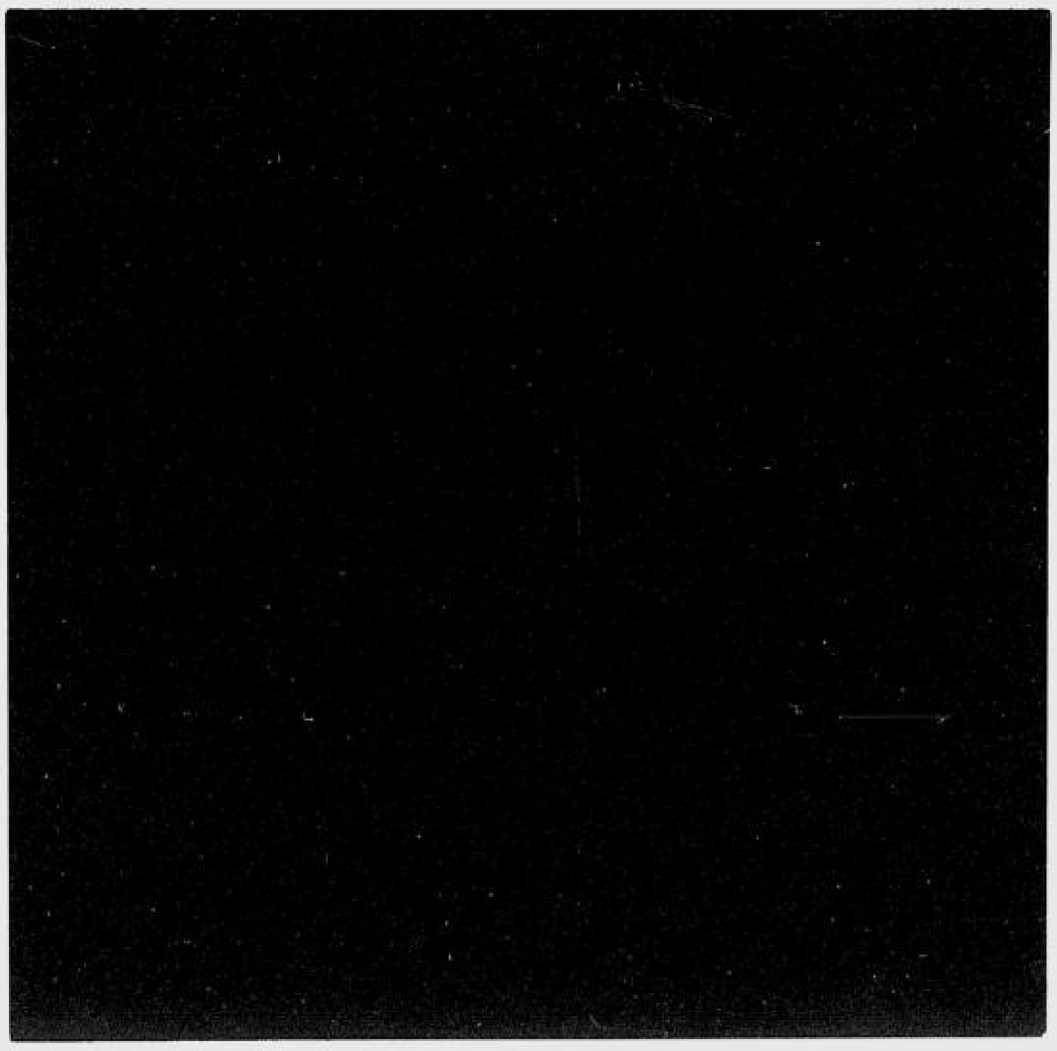

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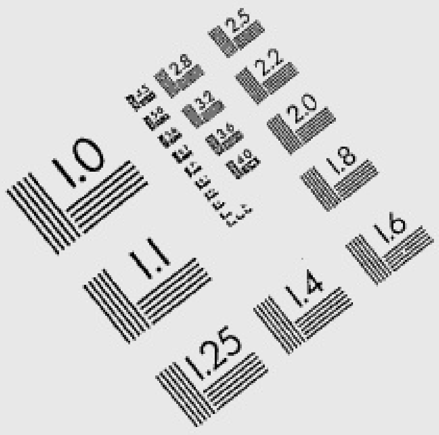
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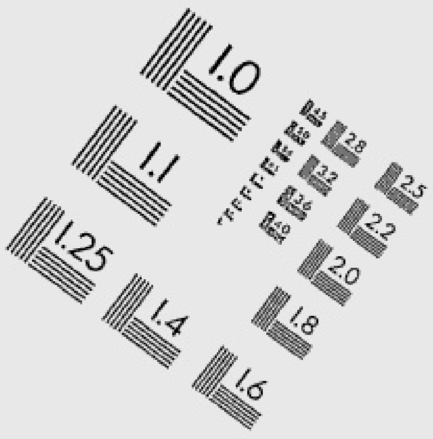
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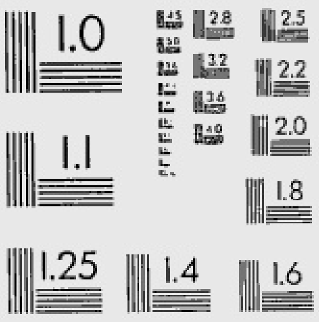
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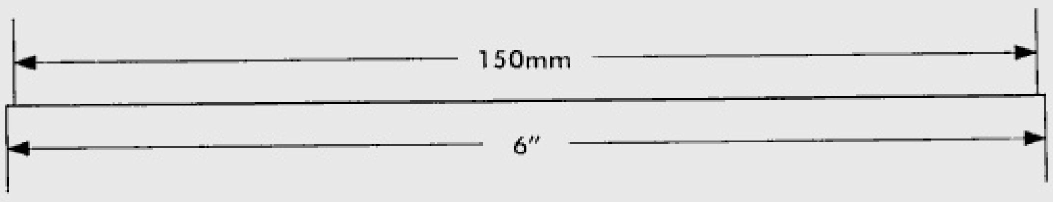

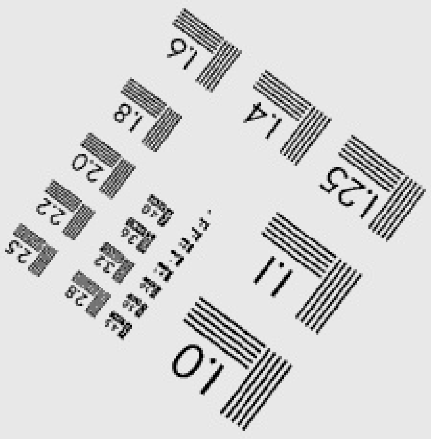
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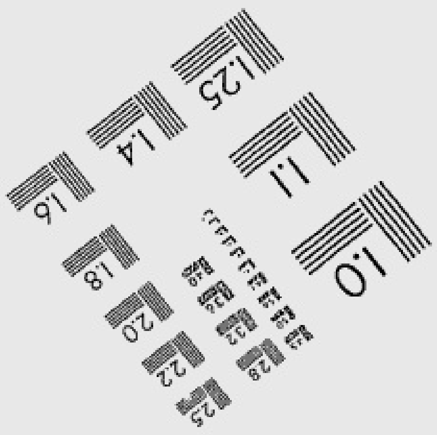
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